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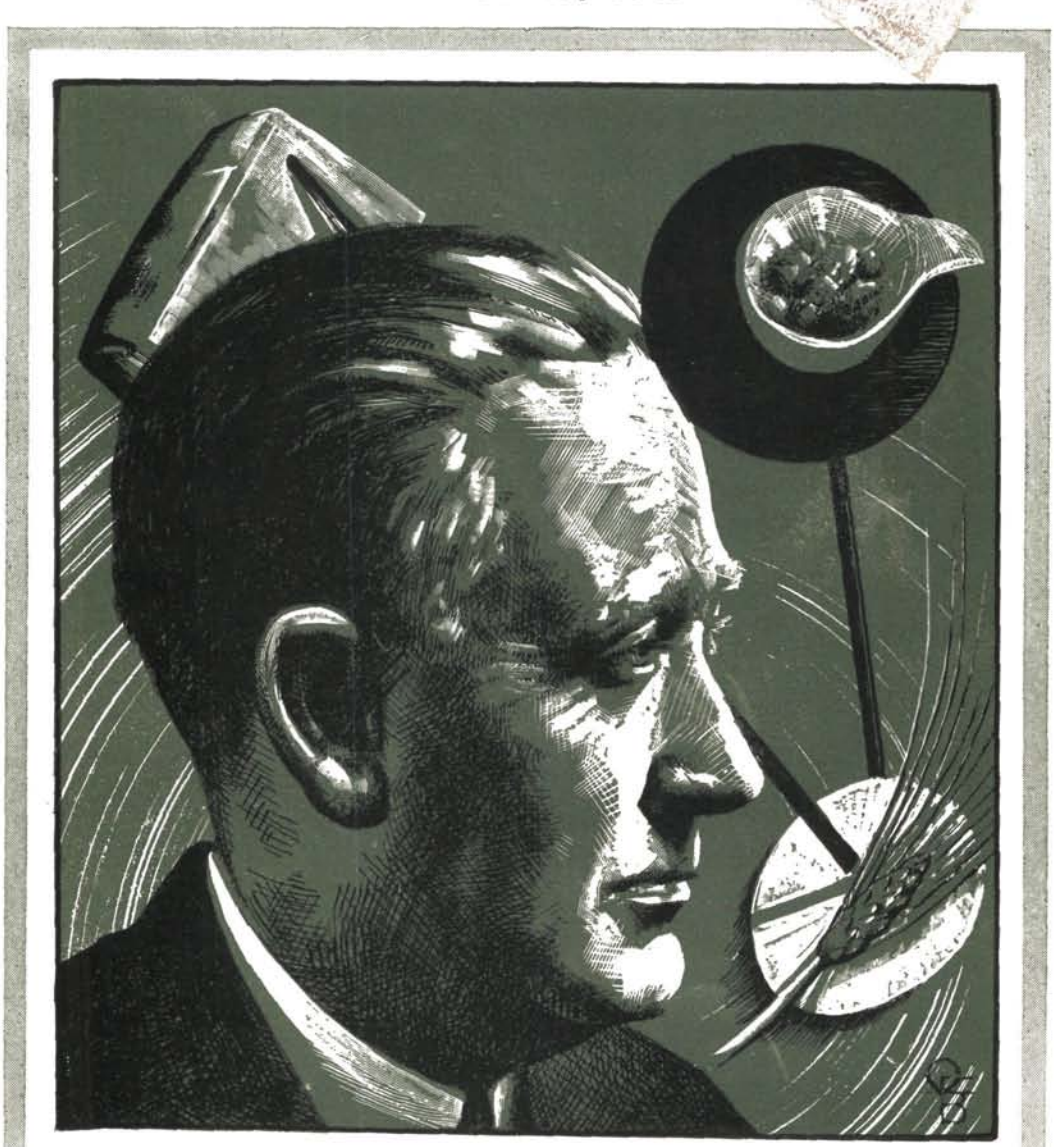

Bertram B. Fowler, author of "The Cooperative Challenge." (See page 9)

The State of Tomorrow

BY REX WARNER

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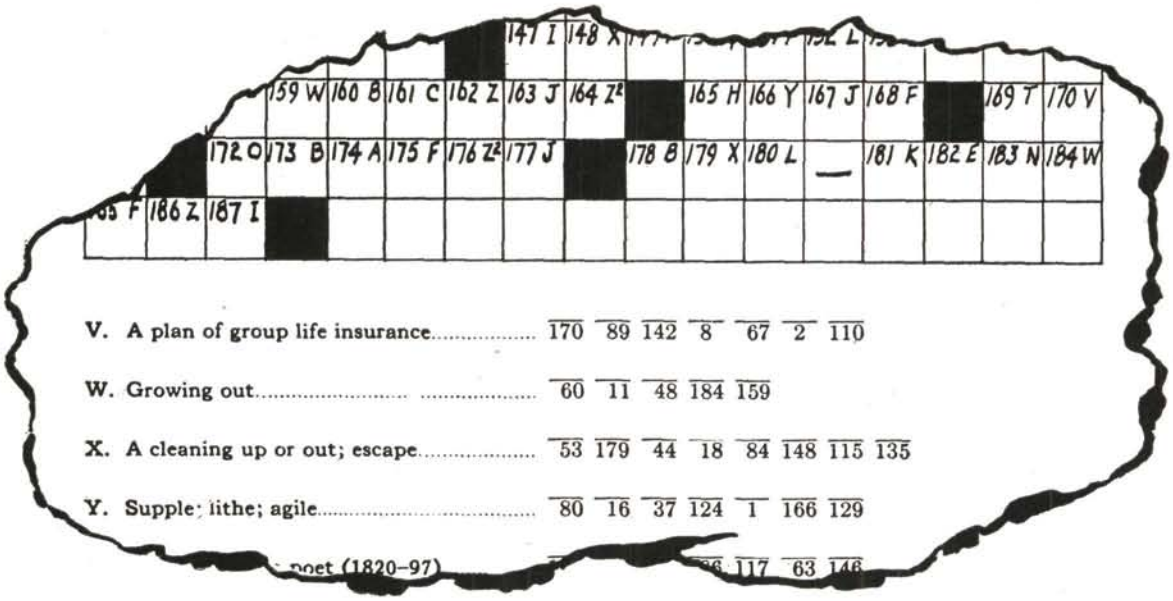

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August 23, 1947

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TRADE Winds

FIVE YEARS OF BONANZA times have put the whammy on some of the best book peddlers in the land. They can't go back to the old grind. They get callouses from carrying two dummies and an order pad. There are other veteran salesmen, made of sturdier stuff, however, who admit they're getting more kick out of selling today, with the heat back on, than they did when customers were begging for the privilege of ordering everything in sight.

Tom Mahony, sales manager of William Morrow, has gone so far as to consider equipping his sales force with pieces of Mr. C. A. Varley's Wishing Cork Tree in Coombes-in-Teignhead, England. "Heaven knows the boys will need all the luck we can give them on their trips these days," he says. And Mr. Varley swears that anybody who carries a piece of cork from his tree simply can't miss amassing a fortune. "Statistics prove this has been indubitably true for three hundred years," says his circular, "and although there isn't much cork left on the tree, I have been urged to give Americans a chance to participate in this sure thing. Of course, the legend of the tree prohibits selling any of the cork, but if you will mail one dollar for a picture of the tree, I will give you a piece of the cork ABSOLUTELY FREE." It is possible that Mr. Varley read about the enterprising chap in California who advertised "This is your last chance to send me a dollar," and collected just short of a thousand greenbacks before Post Office authorities made him desist. They couldn't prosecute him because he had offered absolutely nothing in exchange for the cash.

Nat Wartels, of Crown Publishers, is another who was not content to rest on his orders. He temporarily converted his entire staff of editors, office managers, and accountants into salesmen, and sent them hustling northward to flush orders for B. A. Botkin's forthcoming "Treasury of New England Folklore." Each operative combed the sticks for one week, at the end of which he passed his portfolio, pony express style, to his relief man at a predesignated rendezvous. Wartels, known in sporting circles as "The Perennial Pigeon," has already lost all his profits at gin rummy, but his experiment was a popular triumph, and his loyal employees are beseeching him to sign up "A Treasury of Banff and Lake Louise Folklore" for next summer. . . .

ONE OF THE CROWN BOYS brought back a piece of quaint folklore involving the Governor of Massachusetts. That good man, according to the legend, lost his way while motoring in a remote corner of the state, and sought a night's shelter at a lonely farmhouse. The farmer obviously did not recognize him, but was decent enough to offer him the only empty bed he had. It was in his twelve-year-old son's room, he explained. The boy led the Governor upstairs, where he was deeply pleased to notice three portraits on the wall—one of Washington, one of Lincoln—and one of himself. "Who's the gentleman with the grey hair?" he asked. "George Washington, the father of our country," answered the boy promptly. "And the one with the beard?" "Abraham Lincoln, who freed the slaves."

"Ah, yes," said the Governor. "And now tell me: who is the gentleman in the center picture?" "I haven't the least idea," the boy admitted. "Ma put it there to show me what I'll look like some day if I keep on playing hooky from school." . . .

FOR BUSINESS PURPOSES, the comely and efficient new head of publicity at Appleton-Century uses her maiden name, Virgilia Peterson. In private life, she left Vassar in 1925, dashed off some stories and profiles for *The New Yorker,* and married Prince Paul Sapieha. As the Princess Sapieha, she authored two best sellers of her own, "Polish Profile" and "Beyond This Shore." Today, however, she soft-pedals talk of her own books, prefers to discourse on the potentialities of "The Real Reason," an amplification of Clare Boothe Luce's controversial magazine series in *McCall's,* which Appleton-Century will publish and promote heavily in October. . . . Farrar, Straus have moved into their trim new offices on Thirty-Fourth Street, opposite the Vanderbilt Hotel, but until the reconversion of the ground-floor shop is completed, it takes a cross between a contortionist and a high hurdler to reach the comparative quiet of John Farrar's office without a couple of daubs of paint on either sleeve. Somerset House, most recent addition to the list of reprint publishers, has headquarters in the same building. . . . Farrar, Straus's two best bets for fall are Edison Marshall's new novel, "Yankee Pasha," and Manuel Komroff's latest, "Feast of the Jesters," a tale in the "Coronet" manner, unfolded against the background of the Congress of Vienna. . . .

TOM COSTAIN HAS written four novels to date—and every one of them has been a book-club selection. His latest, "The Moneyman," brings the total sale of the four well over the three-

"But, Queenie, it contains as much protein as a pound of beef, as much vitamin C as three oranges, as much carbohydrate as four slices of bread, as much . . ."

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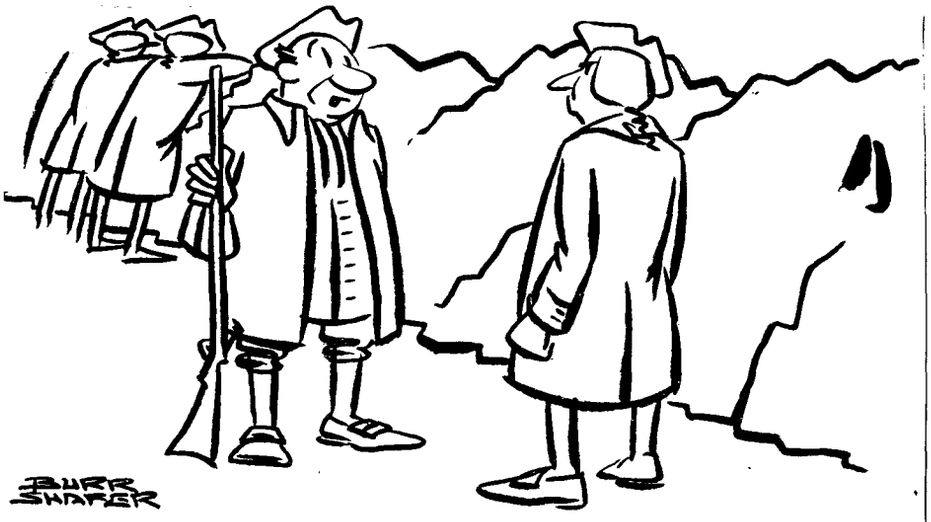

THROUGH HISTORY WITH J. WESLEY SMITH

"About that 'Don't shoot till you see the whites of their eyes' —I'm awfully near-sighted."

million mark. Maybe Tom should have saved that title for his autobiography! . . . John Kieran's "Footnotes on Nature" (Doubleday) is his second best seller of the year. Earlier, he edited the "1947 Information Please Almanac." . . . Keeping pace with Kieran is another popular pillar of the Dutch Treat Club, George Middleton, with his cheery autobiography, "These Things Are Mine" (Macmillan). "The most inaccesible man in theatrical history," states Middleton, "was the late Charles Frohman. One day Louise Closser Hale went to his sanctum in the Empire Theatre in search of a job. 'Mr. Frohman is not here,' reported the office boy. 'I'll wait till he returns,' she answered, and sat down. The boy was silent. After two hours she ventured, 'When will Mr. Frohman be back?' 'I can't say exactly,' was the answer, 'He sailed for Europe this morning.' The office boy, incidentally, was Arnold Daly, who later became a great star himself." . . . Inflationary age department: Houghton Mifflin announce that Ben Ames Williams's new novel, "House Divided," runs to more than 700,000 words—a little less than twice the length of Tolstoy's "War and Peace." . . . Sure thing department: Thomas Duncan's "Gus the Great" (Lippincott), the BOMC selection for September. . . .

FROM AN EDITORIAL in the *Chicago Daily News:*

> The report of James Gray on what Chicago is reading this summer is vaguely disturbing. This is the season when, by tradition, only the frothiest and most saccharine fiction is sold or read. But the best sellers in fiction include Willard Motley's "Knock on Any Door," a frank sociological document on Chicago's slums; "Kingsblood Royal," Sinclair Lewis's shocker on the Negro problem; "Gentleman's Agreement," which deals with the problem of anti-Semitism; and "The Story of Mrs. Murphy," a clinical study of the deterioration of an alcoholic. . . . The best-selling non-fiction may offer future historians an index of the confusion and frustration that characterizes a post-war era. Big sales of "Inside U.S.A." and "Modern Woman: The Lost Sex" represent a striving to find out where we are. Toynbee's "A Study of History" and Du Nouy's "Human Destiny" reflect the yearning to know where we have been and where we are going. . . . Certainly there is little of the so-called escape literature among these best sellers. Maybe there should be more. If there were, perhaps we wouldn't be plagued with so many saucer-shaped spots before our eyes. . . .

JESSYCA RUSSELL'S *Writers Newsletter* is a new bi-monthly report on current markets and activities of authors, editors, and agents that is highly readable and informative. A card addressed to 47 West 56 Street, New York, will bring you a sample copy. . . . Howell, Soskin have distributed this "sample tickler from a ticklish novel" (meaning "Beggar's Choice" by George Axelrod):

> We were getting nowhere. The time had come to get to the point. "Tell me," I said. "Have you read any good books lately?"
>
> "Listen," she said coldly. "Did you drag me out here to talk nonsense or to neck?"
>
> She seized my head between her hands and, holding me firmly by the ears, dragged my face down to hers. She kissed me for about thirty seconds.
>
> "It's so public here," she said. "Let's go for a drive. I know a wonderful place, near a brook. We can swim afterwards."
>
> "I haven't got a bathing suit."
>
> She laughed. "What a line," she said. . . .

At least, you can't say they didn't warn you!

BENNETT CERF.

"From where I sit"

BOOKS like ideas or just about anything else tend to run in series. Recently authors have gotten a little hucksterical in their desire to expose this business or that racket. It's always interesting to read about because Americans pride themselves on getting the inside story and because almost everyone is a layman about everything but his own trade.

Books of this nature are apt to be a little bit explosive and more theactrical than the real thing they depict. But not so with RICHARD MEALAND'S **Let Me Do the Talking,** which is a novel about a literary agent named Gabriel. While it has all the prerequisites of a good and interesting story, it has none of the bad temper you might expect. MEALAND knows that literary agents are people, and that while they have a certain flimsy flair that barks more than it nets, they have their headaches and frustrations like anyone else.

I know some good literary agents and some lousy ones, and I know that what their activities lack in originality (that is to say, they are middlemen rather than originators) they make up for in intuition, inspiration, and enterprise. MEALAND knows this too and a lot more that I as a middleman publisher never heard of. He tells all in this book, a book which is light and gay and in places very funny.

It's an interesting story of a business that can make or break an author, a thing you potential writers would do well to read about. And the proof of this particular pudding is that letters from many of the agents who have read this book testify as to its wit and validity. Some of them thought it was a little more sparkling here and there than their own harried existences; but then, they probably can't see the green grass for the other side of the pasture.

paul

DOUBLEDAY 50th Anniversary

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LOVE STORY

CONTRADICTIONS can be pleasant, even in publishing, and there's a particular one we subscribe to with all our hearts. It's a devotion to books long ago published and read and out of print; remembered with affection through the years of growing up, through depressions and wars and marriages and deaths. This affection for one or two books carried around in memory prompts rather than prevents the buying of new books. It may be that people buy them in the hope of finding others to remember as fondly as the old, but whatever the reason, they do buy books. Therefore we have no business quarrel with an out of print novel from 1898 that seems more dear to some readers than our latest fiction find. We can afford to reminisce with the man who says, "When I was a boy I thought THE GADFLY was the greatest book I'd ever read."

One of the nicest things that can happen in publishing is to combine the best features of both: to bring a greatly loved book back into print with the freshness of spirit accorded a brand-new one, but to keep the thoughtful affection belonging to the old. Possibly twenty years from now there will be readers who look back in that fashion to THE LOST LANDSCAPE, a charming book of recollections we published in early 1946. Or perhaps it will be another. In any case, we can hope for no better fate for any of our current novels than that they may attain some part of the admiration and respect that have belonged to Helen Waddell's PETER ABELARD since its original American publication in 1933.

It is not "advertising" to call the story of Heloise and Abelard one of the truly great love stories of all time. Everybody knows it. What everybody does not know (the book has been out of print for some time, and appeared originally in a depression year) is that Helen Waddell has taken the simple, beautiful, tragic story and put it into the kind of English prose that makes her telling seem the inevitable one. It's a book where everything is right. The lovely, terrible history of these two lovers is lifted from a past eight hundred years old and so unfolded that it shines before us living and passionate still.

When this kind of rightness — or magic — happens in a popular novel it's customary to try to find out why. We rarely can, and PETER ABELARD is no less an enigma than the few other books of its stature. It was written by Helen Waddell, a scholar of considerable reputation. Miss Waddell was educated at Queen's College, Belfast, and Somerville College, Oxford, and holds honorary degrees from St. Andrews, Durham, and Columbia Universities. During the twenties she published THE WANDERING SCHOLARS, an account of Latin poetry and its makers in the centuries between the end of paganism and the peak of Mediaeval Catholicism. The book was as exhilarating as it was scholarly (and is soon to be published again). Yet neither THE WANDERING SCHOLARS, nor her translation of MEDIAEVAL LATIN LYRICS, nor her enchanting collection of legends, BEASTS AND SAINTS, quite prepares one for PETER ABELARD, Miss Waddell's only novel. Her scholarly knowledge of the period can explain its authenticity but not its power or passion.

Knowing that people did drink a certain kind of wine, sing a certain kind of song, wear a particular kind of dress, gives a sureness to the mechanics and asides that fill out a novel. It can't have made her know what they had to say to one another. It can't have made her able to see and set down such scenes as this, in which Abelard returns unexpectedly to Heloise:

> *So it was that he did come upon her unawares . . . How should she not be here, that was the stillness in the heart of flame, the beauty of all beauty? She had been kneeling, gathering primroses, and now moved out from the stack of faggots that had hidden her, but he had no thought for that, nor how it was that at first the valley had held all the promise of the earth but this, and then had flowered in her. She stood there, holding up her long green gown to make a lap for the flowers, her head bowed, gravely pondering. Have you gathered enough, O Beloved, for the woodland rides of the world? For in that green lap lies the seed of mortal beauty, the sap of ancient trees, the white flower of the thorn.*
>
> *For a long moment, silence kept the valley. Then the mare, impatient to be home, pawed the soft ground and tossed her head with a jingling of the bit. At the sharp sound in that quiet place, Heloise raised her head, and saw a strange horseman on the track beside the stream. The light was in her eyes. She put up her hand to shade them, but in that moment he had leapt to the ground and was striding towards her, his cloak streaming behind him in the old remembered gesture. She did not move to meet him, because she could not: but as he came nearer he cried aloud, not to greet her, but at the glory that was in her face.*

Perhaps it comes down to the fact that no one, not even a publisher, can explain a thing called love. We can publish books, and when we have a great one, we can say so.

PETER ABELARD

BY
HELEN WADDELL

WITH FIVE DRAWINGS
BY LASZLO MATULAY

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AT ALL BOOKSTORES

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The Saturday Review of Literature

Studio portrait of Rex Warner, by Basil Shackleton.

"THE WRITER IS STILL THE TRIBUNE OF THE PERSON, THE CRITIC OF INSTITUTIONS, THE AGENT OF CHANGE."

The State of Tomorrow

REX WARNER

I OFTEN imagine a conversation which perhaps once took place—and perhaps never did—between the Roman poets Virgil and Horace. It would be towards the end of Virgil's life, when he had already great works to his credit and when the greatest of them was nearing completion. Horace, too, would be both famous, comfortable, and, as a rule, content.

How would they feel and speak if they were to look back together on the early days—when each of them was financially embarrassed, when Virgil's farm was taken from him by soldiers returned from civil wars, when Horace in the name of liberty fought against the present regime? Were these poets, one often wonders, perfectly content? How would they speak if they were to discuss their youth in the last days of the dying Republic?

I imagine that first and foremost in their minds would be a feeling of thankfulness that they and their friends were at least physically safe. There were no longer rival gangs fighting in the streets and in the forum; there were no longer proscriptions and confiscations at home, violence, corruption, and the disgrace of the Roman name abroad. The generations of civil war had come to an end. The state, while preserving many of the old names, had been in fact reshaped. There was less talk of liberty but far more security, and under the shelter of a government which at last had become efficient men were able to imagine a direction in which the history of their country could consciously be made to move. Might it not be towards another Golden Age?

So, perhaps, these great poets may have felt and spoken. Did they, one wonders, ever surmise that, in spite of the vastly increased efficiency of the state and the new security which it offered, something valuable had gone out of Roman life forever? That the adulation of the Emperor, which was soon to become worship, while being a natural recognition of a new and hopeful order, was also a mark of spiritual subordination to something not actually divine? Did they miss in their own verses and in those of their contemporaries the voices which belonged to the past generation of political chaos — the spontaneity and freshness of Catullus, the vivid and passionate force of Lucretius?

ONE wonders, even, what they would have said had they been able to look into the future. They would have seen for century after century the great Roman state machine still functioning: sometimes imperfectly, no doubt, but on the whole serving most efficiently the greatest security of the greatest number. Yet they would have observed at the center of things, in their own Rome, very quickly appearing the symptoms of decay or of ossification—a series of emperors who were either vicious or irresponsible, in either case most unlike Aeneas; a dead political uniformity; the persecution of those who, like the Stoics or the Christians, attempted to follow some law which they regarded as higher than the law of the state; an alarming growth of superstition; a rigid dictatorship, quite different from the gentle guidance of Maecenas, exercised over the arts of speaking and writing—till in the end, in interim periods of free speech, the most powerful voices of Roman literature would be voices of protest against the immorality of the times, or of somewhat sentimental longing for "noble savages," like the Germans, who remained untainted by the vices of civilization. They, Horace and Virgil, looked forward from the end of war and faction to the expanding prospect of peace and prosperity under an efficient governmental system. Their descendants would lose interest in the future and look back instead with admiration on the disorganized past.

Did Virgil, one wonders, imagine something of this or guess at it when he ruined the logical but amplified the emotional structure of the "Aeneid" by making his hero finally unheroic in his desertion of the Carthaginian queen? The fates of the gods, the laws of history, he seems to say, are indeed inexorable; but there are occasions when the civilizing missioner will sacrifice smugly something more valuable than his own ends, there are situations where the peace and prosperity won by blood and iron and abnegation are no more than what Tacitus, through the mouth of a rebel Briton, was later to call them—a solitude and a wilderness.

It is interesting to imagine conversations between dead men, but one can hardly do so without referring their imagined words to the present; and, inaccurate as must be all

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historical comparisons, this one may not be valueless. For we today are living at a time when the state, in some form or other, seems bound to intervene more and more in the affairs of individuals and when, on the whole, its intervention will be demanded and, in many instances, even be welcomed. In our times, as in those of Virgil, countless lives have been lost or disrupted by years of economic chaos and war; and in Europe, at any rate, what the ordinary man wants most will be physical security. The other things, he hopes, will be added later; but for the moment freedom from want and freedom from war is his chief desire.

MOREOVER, it is now becoming plain to almost everyone that the old pre-war system of individual and national selfishness is, apart altogether from any moral objections which might be made to it, so ineffective and dangerous that it must be replaced by something different. The state which is prepared to plan efficiently so that the people may have a reasonable certainty that their national resources are being used to the benefit of all, and so that in international affairs there may be a reality of law and order, will deserve and receive loyalty from its citizens. Such a state is certain to be, in some sense or other, socialist; but we have seen how various are the interpretations of this term. Indeed, though one must work and hope for what is best, it is useless to prophesy what exact form will be taken by the state of the future in any particular area. Here I assume only that such a state will be efficient; to be efficient it must be capable of overriding individual interests, financial or hereditary, for the common good; and its aims, of peace and security, must be obvious to everyone, so that it will secure the loyalty of its citizens.

How will literature be affected by such a state? Or how is it desirable that literature should be affected? And in attempting to find some sort of an answer for these questions I am well aware that our terms of reference are incomplete, that literature is only one of man's activities, that until we have determined and experienced the precise form of the state of tomorrow we cannot exactly estimate its effect, that we are proceeding by guesswork, not by calculation. Yet guesswork can be a preliminary method of scientific investigation, and to some at least literature is so important that one can no more help guessing its future than one could help imagining the thoughts of Virgil or of Horace almost twenty centuries ago.

It may be, of course, that the state of the future will disregard literature as entirely as did the state of the recent past; but this, for many reasons, seems unlikely. Even if efficiency in production and distribution were to be the only watchword, we have learnt that for this end alone propaganda is essential. Moreover, we have learnt that a novel can exercise as much (or even more) political influence as can a procession or an official leaflet. So long as men have the leisure and the desire to read, literature is sure to be a force not only in life but in politics. There is a sense in which Dr. Goebbels realized as well as Shelley that "poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world." Also it seems reasonable to assume that the state of the future will represent itself as something new and hopeful, even though it may retain and revere many of the ideals and institutions of the past. Home secretaries and ministers of propaganda will find the support of literature for their new regimes just as valuable as Maecenas found it. Nor, of course, will they enlist this support in a wholly cynical manner to glorify themselves or to assure their predominance. Apart from vanity or fear, they will regard the achievements of their new systems as worthy of commemoration and, indeed, if they succeed, as we have imagined, in solving the problems of poverty, unemployment, and war there will be writers enough ready wholeheartedly to collaborate with the new order. It is probable that the state will subsidize these writers either directly or indirectly; indeed, this will be a necessary step if serious literature is not to disappear entirely. Already before the war there was only a handful of writers who, without independent means, were able to live by writing alone; and however much the moralists of the market may insist that the rough-and-tumble of commercial competition or bread-winning at an uncongenial job is valuable to the writer, the fact is that time and energy are both limited. If, then, writing is to be regarded as a valuable social activity, the chances are that

(*Continued on page 30*)

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

CLOSING LINES OF SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS

Miss Grace Blake, of Greenfield, Ohio, submits the closing lines of twenty of Shakespeare's plays. How many of them can you identify? Allowing five points for each correct answer, a score of forty is par, fifty is very good, and sixty or better is excellent. Answers are on page 25.

1. As you from crimes would pardon'd be,
   Let your indulgence set me free.
2. And we'll strive to please you every day.
3. Think not on him till tomorrow: I'll devise thee brave punishments for him. Strike up, pipers.
4. Give me your hands, if we be friends,
   And Robin shall restore amends.
5. You that way: we this way.
6. Well, while I live, I'll fear no other thing
   So sore as keeping safe Nerissa's ring.
7. If it be true that good wine needs no bush, 'tis true that a good play needs no epilogue. . . . When I make curtsy, bid me farewell.
8. 'Tis a wonder, by your leave, she will be tamed so.
9. And now, let's go hand in hand, not one before another.
10. Nought shall make us rue,
    If England to itself do rest but true.
11. Let us not leave till all our own be won.
12. Now civil wounds are stopp'd, peace lives again:
    That she may long live here, God say Amen!
13. All the best men are ours; for 'tis ill hap
    If they hold when their ladies bid 'em clap.
14. So, call the field to rest: and let's away,
    To part the glories of this happy day.
15. Never was a war did cease,
    Ere bloody hands were washed, with such a peace.
16. New joy wait on you! Here our play has ending.
17. The oldest hath borne most: we that are young
    Shall never see so much, not live so long.
18. So, thanks to all at once, and to each one,
    Whom we invite to see us crown'd at Scone.
19. Go, bid the soldiers shoot.
20. Myself will straight aboard; and to the state
    This heavy act with heavy heart relate.

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Cooperatives Are Big Business

THE COOPERATIVE CHALLENGE. By Bertram B. Fowler. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1947. 265 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by FRED SMITH

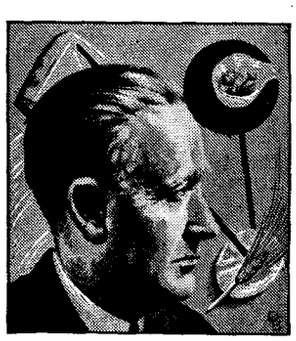
FOR THE American businessman, the book of the year has just been published. Its name: "The Cooperative Challenge." Its author: Bertram Fowler, whose long-time study of the cooperative movement in the world in general, and in the United States in particular, has previously blossomed in such publications as *The Reader's Digest, Collier's, The American Magazine,* and *The Saturday Evening Post.* His previous book, "Consumer Cooperation in America," was a quiet prelude to his new work.

"The Cooperative Challenge" cannot be hailed as a great book, nor even as a book that will give business or advertising men any pleasure or satisfaction. Its importance lies solely in the fact that it is the first comprehensive record of the present status of the cooperative movement in these highly capitalistic United States. This record, as most businessmen can now see for the first time, is a slightly staggering one. Their established pattern of growth and expansion is such that American industry had better make up its mind whether to retool its processes and techniques to accommodate the cooperative movement, or immediately gird its loins and prepare to do battle. If Mr. Fowler's facts are right—and there is no reason to doubt them — the economic system which the National Association of Manufacturers describes sanctimoniously as "the American way of life" may soon be seriously challenged: and as a word of warning, it should be pointed out that in preliminary skirmishes the cooperatives seem always to have come out on top. One such skirmish between the cooperatives and the power interests of the Northwest culminated in court, and in ruling for the cooperatives, the presiding judge established an epochal precedent:

> In this case [he said] we see illustrated the clash between different types of government and economics. And my opinion is that the cooperative movement may well become the last defense of private enterprise against government ownership.

At this particular writing, the cooperatives are into almost everything —and generally with substantive success. Their business transactions this year will amount to more than a billion dollars; but that is only an inconclusive indication of their real significance. A better indication is the story, retold by Mr. Fowler, of the handful of small-town people who started a filling station to save a few cents on gas and oil and who parlayed that filling station into a wholesale cooperative servicing many automotive cooperatives; then parlayed *that* into a cooperative refinery; then branched out and bought wells; then attracted the attention, through their economies, of cooperative-minded people in Sweden and South Africa, where oil cartels keep prices prohibitively high; and now these international groups, headed by the United States contingent, have filed a brief with the United Nations to permit them free access to Middle Eastern oil reserves. Thus, in the span of a dozen years, a small group of aggressive citizens has managed to get around, undermine, lick, outthink, and out-maneuver the largest, richest, most powerful international combine in the history of the world. Of course, attempts have been made to stop it; but the blunt facts are that the battle of cooperatives against industrial combines reduces itself in most cases to a struggle between voters and an octopus; and state and Federal legislators traditionally have more respect for votes than for octopi, even if it slightly threatens the status quo.

Cooperatives have made important inroads in medicine, against the best-laid plans and almost irresistible powerhouse punches of the AMA. It started when an unknown doctor in a Western village talked his patients into putting up money for a cooperative hospital. The plan was simple: You pay $50 for a life membership and $25 a year. You and your friends own the hospital, pay the salaries of the staff, and use the facilities as much as you please. In case of a major operation, you pay a few extra charges, but the total bill comes to around $50 instead of $300 or so. This first hospital succeeded rapidly, acquired a large and competent staff, and served both members and nonmembers for miles around. A man in Texas heard about it and one was started in that state. Then the cat was out of the bag and cooperative hospitals were launched in scores of places. The AMA, fearing socialized medicine, did everything possible, up to and including an attempt to revoke the license of the physician who started it all; but they lost. They tried to pass a bill through the Texas legislature to outlaw cooperative hospitals. They lost again. Strangely enough, however, they did succeed in limiting cooperative hospitals to towns under 2,500 population—a stipulation that doesn't prevent the construction of a cooperative hospital outside a



THE AUTHOR: Bertram Fowler claims a great personal calm "except when certain principles are involved," many of these having to do with cooperatives. In "Consumer Cooperation in America," "Food: A Weapon of Victory," "The Lord Helps Those," a study of his native Nova Scotia's co-ops, and the current volume, he exhorts against old-time business methods no less passionately, albeit more quietly. He cut his literary teeth on Carlyle, Shakespeare, Tolstoy, and Ruskin as a farm boy in the States. He still prefers wood chopping to golf—a pleasure country hosts pamper. After World War I service with the Canadian Expeditionary Force, he attended Boston University and Harvard, later being asked to do an article by an editor who didn't recognize him as the buck private he'd exhibited as "an awful example of what a soldier should not look like." He has lectured and conducted forums on cooperatives throughout Canada, Europe, and the Americas, worked on *The Christian Science Monitor,* taught sociology and economics at Memorial University College, St. Johns, N.B. To buttress "The Cooperative Challenge," he probed every major Midwest, Pacific Northwest, and Canadian co-op. Symphonic music, especially Mozart, sends him, but he's equally happy at Nick's in Greenwich Village, where Pee Wee Russell "rides a clarinet completely out of the world." He's a folk-song collector and Savoyard, theatre devotee and balletomane, used to play hockey, now relishes the more sedentary spectacle of a good prize fight. He doesn't want to write the Great American Novel, but hopes to produce a nonfiction work on the "[great] American being." He's optimistic: "My belief in America as the leader of the world toward full freedom and abundance is fixed."

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large city, for the benefit of the residents of the large city. It was face-saving victory.

Every alert businessman knows about the vast farm cooperatives of the Middle West. They didn't, however, realize how large they are. Nor do they know that the farm cooperatives originally started in the rural areas of Indiana and Ohio and have now become all-inclusive consumer cooperatives, owning mills, insurance companies, refineries, dairies, supermarkets, filling stations, and virtually everything else involved in the economic life of the average American citizen. Moreover, these are not small, badly managed, inconsequential properties; they are vast networks of highly profitable, valuable units. The cooperatives are Big Business.

All this started, according to Mr. Fowler, with twenty-eight unhappy weavers in Rochdale, England. There was not a philosopher in the lot. They were simply men with families who made too little money and had to find some way to make ends meet. So for a year the Rochdale weavers pooled their resources and finally built up a capital fund of $140. Then they sat down and drew up some rules to govern a cooperative buying plan; and it is remarkable that these rules, originally outlined in 1844, are still clung to like religious tenets by the entire cooperative movement. And it is even more remarkable that wherever a cooperative group has tried to improvise upon or alter the rules, the cooperative has sooner or later collapsed.

Here are the rules:

1. Open membership. No one to be excluded because of race, creed, or color.
2. One member, one vote. No voting by proxy.
3. Share capital to be paid a moderate, fixed return.
4. Surplus of an association to be returned to a member in ratio to his purchases.
5. Neutrality of the co-op in religion and politics.
6. Trading on a cash basis.
7. Education of members with reference to consumer cooperative principles.

Mr. Fowler, in reciting the length and breadth of the cooperative challenge, gives no indication of what the American businessman ought to do about it. There is no mistaking the fact, however, that Mr. Fowler believes that the cooperative system is pretty much the answer to most of the evils that beset the universe. With a simplicity of analysis that might knock the wind out of a more cautious man, he explains that the international oil deal in which the cooperatives are now engaging will completely eliminate a major and probable cause of another war. He also states, in speaking of the way in which organized labor and cooperatives are working together (Walter Reuther's UAW has a vast workers' cooperative housing project ready to go as soon as materials are available and has an officer in charge of promoting co-ops) that it is the answer to labor-management problems.

Incidentally, in speaking of labor, he states that "what is required now is not a diagnosis of what has caused the dizzy upward spiral of prices, but an idea as to where it will lead. The answer is obvious. Such an inflation presages a depression." He says:

> Ignoring the maze of argument and opinion, let us try to ascertain just what labor has been asking for. Again the answer is obvious. Labor is striking for better housing, for better diet, better clothing; in short, labor is striking for a higher standard of living through greater buying power, and these things are not necessarily contained in a fatter pay envelope.

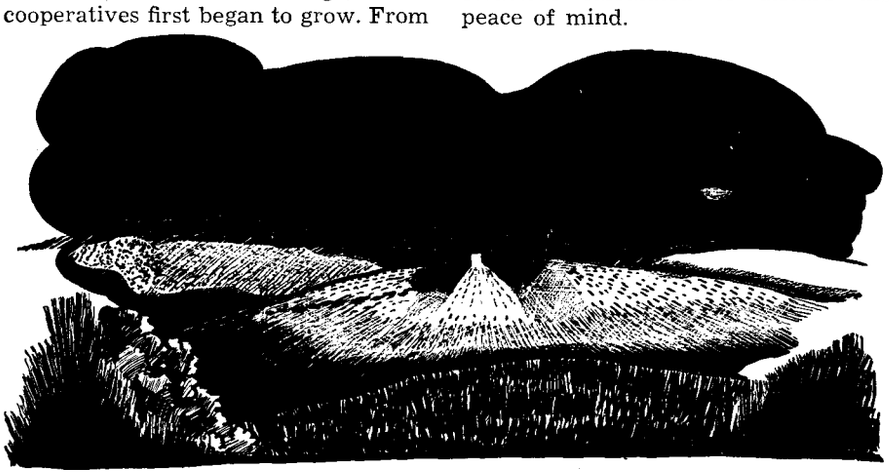
You see, it is all extremely simple: They have been striking for cooperatives and cooperatives will detour the depression, salvage the free enterprise system, and keep the peace.

I bring this up because one of the tragedies about a book of this sort is often its super-condensed, portable, handy-dandy philosophy. The average businessman who starts to read it may become so distressed with Mr. Fowler's simplified economics, and his streamlined social cogitations (which seem at times to be strangely reminiscent of the prepared sentiments available at any Western Union office) that he will underestimate the journalistic facts in the case. He will be inclined to charge off the facts as figments of Fowler's own salesmanship and optimism and stubborn conviction that capitalism will evolve into the "practical democracy" of cooperative economics. In doing this, the disbelieving businessman will be continuing in the pattern he set for himself about ten years ago, when cooperatives first began to grow. From the soft leather and deep plush of an executive office, the co-ops then certainly did not look like anything but an unimpressive pastime to be indulged in by disgruntled consumers, who would soon grow tired of trying to run their own businesses anyway, and of buying lackluster products that haven't the glamor that a million-dollar advertising campaign can shed.

Any enterprise, however, which now involves the lives and purchasing of more than a million families, and which accounts for more than a billion dollars' worth of American retail business, has ceased to be a plaything.

Perhaps it is time for the businessmen and advertising executives to take a new, hard look at their own affairs. Perhaps we should take off those glasses which are so rosily tinted with self-satisfaction and try to figure just how much more cheaply a cooperative could run our business than we are running it. Such an analysis, systematically made, may turn up a lot of expenses that are chargeable to such things as vanity, fear of competition, and continuous susceptibility to somebody else's salesmanship. In toto, it may turn up the fact that the present free enterprise system does have one serious drawback: it has been sitting around so long that it has gathered an unholy collection of barnacles. All organizations, sooner or later, become afflicted with bureaucracy. The same thing will happen to the cooperative system over the years.

Now, however, the cooperatives are young, fresh, and lean. The head of even the largest cooperative is unlikely to do what most businessmen are going to do after they read this article: *viz,* ring for the public relations man, tell him to get a copy of the book and read it and come back with some recommendations, which unquestionably will encompass the boss's emotions on such matters as cooperatives, Communists, and labor leaders, and will contain nothing constructive calculated to disturb his peace of mind.



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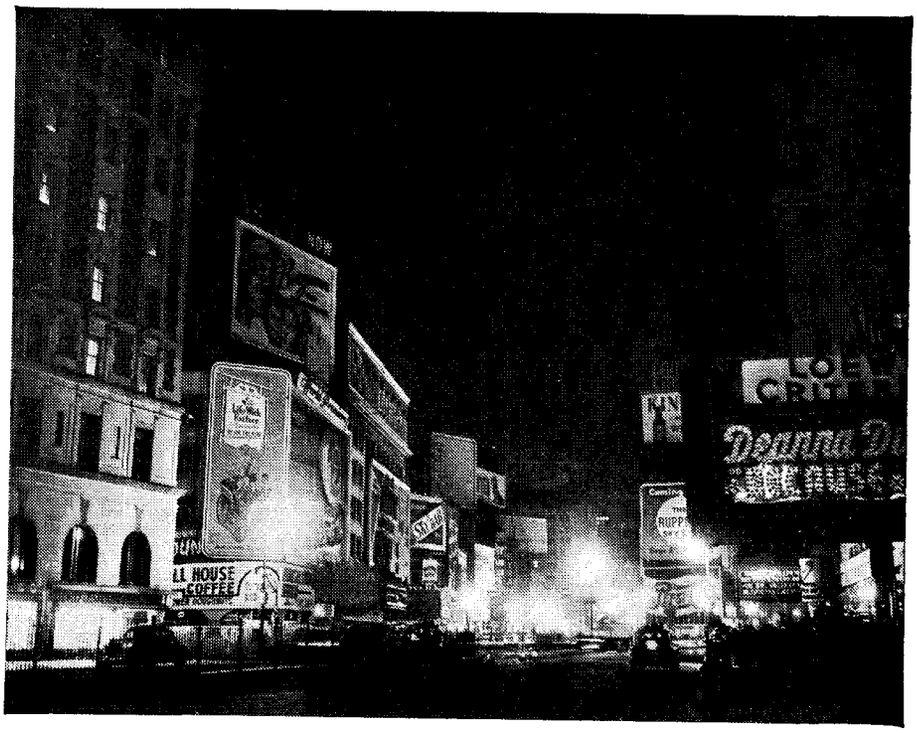

—*Press Association.*

"Tattered Collar and Dirty Cuffs"

THE BIG DRAG. By Mel Heimer. New York: Whittlesey House. 1947. 201 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by BERNARD SOBEL

WHAT was once "The Great White Way," symbol of gaiety, art, and inspiration, Mel Heimer dubs "The Big Drag." To him Broadway is "a state of mind"; and in this book it becomes largely the state of his mind, one-sided and sordid—"a tattered collar and dirty cuffs."

The emphasis is on the drab; and he talks of dives, bars, gambling joints, and taxi-dance halls as if they were exclusively indigenous to Broadway. In collecting his material, he descends to the depths of underground night clubs and ascends to the heights of suspect penthouses. The resultant panorama is extensive, a complete microcosm peopled with agents, actors, Hollywood visitors, waitresses, gangsters, tourists, gun molls, models, innocent bystanders, baseball fans, and race-track touts.

Now and then, individuals like Sherman Billingsley, Joe E. Lewis, Fred Allen, and Tallulah Bankhead emerge more or less clearly and more or less authentically. Well-rounded, however, is the close-up of Billy Rose. This extraordinary and original man appears here in a new light, a noteworthy fact considering the number of stereopticons which have already revealed his variegated luminosity.

Though the presentation is somewhat tedious, the author phrases skilfully, at times, alert observances representative of Rialto life: "About five p.m., when the late papers were beginning to flop from the trucks onto the stands in the Forties. . . ."

But semi-truths and errors punctuate the text. He states that Helen Morgan sang "The Man I Love" at the Silver Slipper, a song written years later. He neglects Leon and Eddie's and sloughs off the popular columnist, Louis Sobol. He calls the greatly beloved physician, Leo Michel, "learned Doc Mischel." He states that "Flo Ziegfeld stomped around his office in his bathrobe," whereas Mr. Ziegfeld never came to work unless he was fully clothed and in the latest mode. He makes dubious generalizations like "Negroes are better musicians than white men," and "the man doesn't live who can bat in the same league with a woman." There is not, alas, a single word about the crusading idealist, Antoinette Perry, immortalized now in the actor's "Tony."

Heimer's contention that press agentry is "a field where literature is, usually, a complete stranger" disregards the fact that the list of modern press agents has included today's leaders in literature, drama, and motion pictures; S. N. Behrman, Sam Hoffenstein, Russel Crouse, Arthur Kober, Lillian Hellman, Edwin Justus Mayer, Robert Sisk, Helen Deutsch, Kenyon Nicholson, Dayton Stoddard, and Morrie Ryskind.

Furthermore, to dub the press agent by the old cliché, "necessary evil," is to ignore his influence as a guide and interpreter of the drama, biographer of the actor, and popularizer of musicals like "Show Boat," "Oklahoma!," "Brigadoon," and "Finian's Rainbow."

The author forgets that even though Broadway is built on hardship, heartache, recognition, neglect, good, and evil, it is, nevertheless, the place, above all, for laughter, forgetfulness, beauty, education, and inspiration. It offers the best works of art that America can produce and the best that the rest of the world can lend. It is the meeting place for Shakespeare, Sophocles, and Ibsen. Here critics fight for and help sustain the loftiest ideals of the theatre. Broadway is still "The Great White Way."

Forever Alien

MORTAL HUNGER. By Harry E. Wedeck. New York: Sheridan House. 1947. 281 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by NATHAN L. ROTHMAN

THIS fictionized life of Lafcadio Hearn is written *con amore,* upon a high key of enthusiasm. With tireless devotion it traces every stop upon Lafcadio's itinerary, from the isles of Greece through Paris and New Orleans to the isles of Japan, and the whole account is wilfully splashed with those violent colors which Mr. Wedeck has found in the writings of Hearn. It is written with sincerity and emotion, yet it remains, unhappily, an ineffectual story, an eager sketch with gaping spaces and far too many unfinished strokes. I do not believe this arises out of the limitations of Hearn himself. Granted that he was at best a second-rate writer, and that his career had much of the meretricious in it; yet he was undoubtedly a brilliant personality, highly sentient, an uncompromising romantic, a fearless individualist. And he sustained some of the more searing experiences of life: he was barely five feet tall, he was forever an alien (even at last, most tragically, in the Japanese world he adopted as his own), he was blinded violently in one eye, he knew the drive of the creative urge and the drag of lust and saw them finally as one, and he knew the essential loneliness that so many other artists better and worse than he have known. No, the limitations of the book are those of its writing.

I think that Mr. Wedeck failed by sinking purposefully into the same emotional and immoderate lushness that colors so much of Hearn's writing. But it is far from logical to

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apply an artist's methods to a study of himself. Wedeck is not Hearn. Hearn did very well with the material he made so especially his own: the legends of China, the voodoo rituals of New Orleans, the folklore of Brittany and the Indies, macabre tales from everywhere. Wedeck's material is something else, the personality of Hearn himself, a very subtle and mysterious literary problem that calls for more than devotion. Not to labor the point, a writer lives uniquely within two realms: his writing and his mental processes. To know the writer essentially, from the inside outward, we must have a thorough and penetrating revelation of these two sources. And these are the sources, specifically, that Mr. Wedeck skirts widely. To mention books in passing, to say he wrote "Kotto," he wrote "One of Cleopatra's Nights," is to say nothing at all. In a catalogue that is all right; in a study of the artist's life the creative process, how the book came to be, how it was written, how the writer felt and grew as he wrote it, these are indispensable.

It seems as though Mr. Wedeck rears back tenderly before these things; he will not intrude. So also with the fearful and wonderful personal events of Hearn's life. He is struck, suffers the loss of one eye—in one sentence. He approaches a woman, and the chapter draws a dutiful curtain. How are we to know the man if his reactions at the high moments of experience are to be shrouded in the biographer-novelist's reticence? What we do have, then, is a sympathetic and amorphous portrait of a sensitive soul, forever in search, forever in flight, addicted to exaggeration of gesture and speech, often foolish, always honest, an adventurer in sensation, somehow a writer. The outline is there to be filled in with the blood and nerves of life. More can be done, with less love and more perception, for Lafcadio Hearn.

—*Drawing by Robert Huwahara.*

"Lafcadio Hearn knew the drive of the creative urge and the drag of lust, and saw them finally as one."

The Black Woman

By Mark Van Doren

THE big black woman smiled on this small earth
And on our eyes that thought the sun went down.
Down where? You cannot see it for the trees
And the thick air, she said, but it is bright
Forever, it is why our breasts are brown.

We face it all the way around the ring.
You only notice noonday and the dusk.
And one of these you call your looking glass,
And one you say is sleep. But that is when
We stir again with milk, and gather musk.

What you have named the night is when we stand,
Still nurses to the hours, and make them be.
They move in us; all time is but the scent
Of our soft patience. It is how I sit,
And how the merry world goes round with me.

And round. For it comes back to waken you,
And let you look as yesterday you did.
Up where, and whom do you see, and when the dark comes,
What of your whiteness? It is not forever,
Ever, like the sun these breasts have hid.

Ex-GI Jaunt

ON MY WAY HOME. By Richard Phenix. New York: William Sloane Associates, Inc. 1947. 267 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by RONALD SCHILLER

WHEN young Captain Richard Phenix was mustered out of the Army in 1945, he had $225 in cash, a good car, and considerable apprehension regarding the life he was about to enter. This was understandable, for, like millions of other young Americans, he found himself at the ripe age of twenty-five with little experience in fending for himself in a world of harsh competitive enterprise. He had been an adolescent, then a soldier; now he was a veteran. He had never been a civilian.

More wisely than most, he decided to ease himself gently into the strange and perilous waters, acquainting himself gradually with the procedures and problems of civilian living. He left Camp Crowder, Missouri, on a long trip to his home in New Hampshire, by way of the Pacific Coast. He started off with the healthy assumption that the country owed him exactly nothing for his five years of service and that his exalted rank of captain would impress nobody. He took any job he could get, seeking variety and trying to meet and understand as many types of civilians as he could.

At Salt Lake City, he became handyman to a kind-hearted German-Jewish junk dealer. In the Sierras he cut lumber for a forest ranger. He worked as a laundry deliveryman in San Diego, a grocery clerk in Los Angeles, a college student and gardener in Palo Alto. In the State of Washington, some five months later, he discovered that his best friend, unable to take the gaff, was fleeing back to the security of the Army, but Phenix, now hardened and reconciled to civilian life, refused to go with him. He headed back to New Hampshire and school.

It would be nice to say that this first book by an ex-GI is a roaring success and indeed, in outline, it has the makings of a first-class yarn. Actually, it is a very dull and utterly pointless story. It is written in a monotone with little depth and less wit. The dialogue has an impressive authenticity but is as meaningless as backyard gossip. The characterizations are one-dimensional. Mr. Phenix doesn't appear to be very lusty, or else he is a very discreet young man. Except for a hand-holding acquaintance with a Hollywood school girl, he has no adventures with women. He gets into wrist-slapping

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arguments, but no honest fights. He is undoubtedly a model son who would make a fine husband.

Worse still, the author seems to have emerged from the Army with no strong convictions about peace or war or any of the political, social, and economic problems that threaten the world with imminent disaster. After five months of working and wandering and meeting people, he still had no convictions about them and apparently no special interest in them.

"On My Way Home" is apt to affect a reviewer like a shaggy dog story. He is left with the uncomfortable feeling that either he has missed the point or that the story never had one to begin with.

Ronald Schiller, executive editor of United Nations World, fought on carriers in the Pacific as USNR lieutenant during World War II.

Next-War Literature

FREEDOM AND ORDER: Lessons from the War. By Eduard Heimann. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1947. 335 *pp.* $3.

PATRIOTISM OR PEACE? By Adam de Hegedus. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1947. 266 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by ASHER BRYNES

THIS is as curious a pair of samples of what might be called, for lack of a better term, the next-war literature, as it is possible to conceive. Dr. Heimann is disarmingly heavy, Mr. de Hegedus suspiciously light.

"Freedom and Order" is a philosophical work of a type with which we are growing more familiar here; it is one of the latest in the long succession of efforts, heretofore chiefly German in origin, to rationalize the clashing forces of society in the abstract by imposing upon them a pattern equally abstract. And this, in turn, is intended to serve as a basis for a program of remedial action.

The pattern that Dr. Heimann employs is the one worked out by the philosopher Hegel. The chief difference in the present case is that it is imposed upon a much larger sphere of conflict than the embryonic Prussian state—the entire globe, no less. What the author undertakes to do is to tell us that as Christians as well as citizens we must submit to the joint authority of a totalitarian State Department and a remodeled church around the corner. Here, then, is a volume of advice which will seem sardonic to an American who has twice seen his country compelled to go to war against the nation which once swallowed the same, holus bolus.

"This book is about quite serious matters," remarks Dr. Heimann, and in a charming preface he works hard to make them sound simple. For if it were his purpose to scare the reader he could do it by saying that the dependence of freedom on its opposite, order, is dialectical. "But no such thing will be said in this book; no such word as dialectic will be used."

But he finds he must use it, and not once but fourteen times; the most disputed part of his argument is entirely begummed with it:

> Inasmuch as democratic liberty suffers a change of its function and ends in privilege, socialism by opposing it becomes the defender of democratic liberty against privilege. The dialectical change in the character of liberal democracy cannot fail dialectically to change its opposite. Inasmuch, finally, as the dialectical change in character does not completely wipe out the identity of original liberal democracy, both the anti-democratic and the neo-democratic potentialities of socialism, its opposite, are mixed up.

They are indeed. However, what Dr. Heimann is immediately concerned with is the operative relationship between order and freedom; and on this level he faces the issue squarely and with an unusual clarity of definition. Order is more necessary, physically; freedom is higher, spiritually; we must have order because we live in a technically complex society but freedom is more far-reaching because of the gradual emancipation of the human person which has been going on for some thousands of years. The requirement of order is the stronger because it has its basis in the satisfaction of our daily needs; while freedom is that through which man is man; *i.e.*, it is the condition toward which our bewilderingly zigzag history drives us.

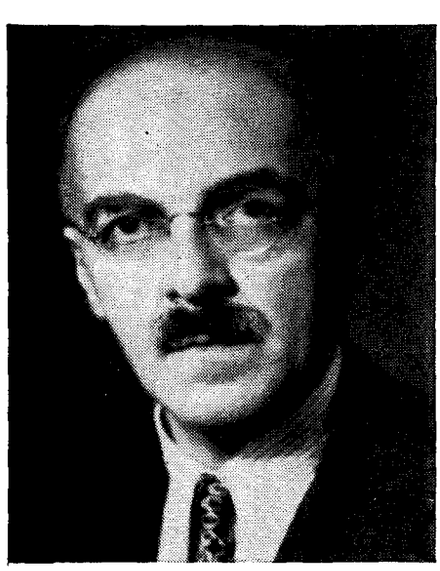
If this arrangement of priorities is true we must look to more wars and bigger. In war we realize the acme of order and consequently produce more than in peace; the recent war production figures tell a plain story. Simultaneously the change of air, the shift of occupations, the shedding of all but immediate responsibilities made most of us seem more free. So it was at the beginning wherever there was the hope of a speedy and victorious outcome, and especially among the proletariat, the poor; the harsh fact is that war holds no terrors for the dispossessed.

Dr. Heimann's socialist prescription for the evils that arise from the impetuous action of such unattached masses of people is to anchor them to the factories, to enroll them in the economic system by fiat and regulation. If everyone *had* something to lose by war no one would want any part of it. However, the only things that can be owned by a man are the things he has earned as a man, freely choosing (or as Dr. Heimann says, choosing according to his nature) to do so. Things given are things lent; he who giveth taketh away—surely there is more of that in history and experience than the three-term dialectic of Hegel-Marx can demonstrate to be the opposite.

The core of the difficulty is that Dr.

—*Carlyle Studios.*

Adam de Hegedus: Christians as well as citizens must submit to totalitarianism and a remodeled church.



Eduard Heimann: Order is more necessary, physically; freedom is higher, spiritually.

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Heimann, like most socialists, insists on defining capitalism in an archaic way; he says it is an economic system whose control is vested in those who hold title to the instruments of production. The fact is that in this country, at any rate—and our system continues to operate with an increasing efficiency both absolutely and relatively to any other in sight—control has largely passed into the hands of those who actually work the apparatus. We need and are going to have more of that sort of capitalism, not less.

The book by Mr. de Hegedus contrasts strongly. The processes by which the great national powers have been reduced to three, or possibly two, through the past hundred and fifty years are set forth with such an equable emphasis upon all the details that our future, *one* nation, *one* world, will doubtless happen whether we like it or not. The message of the book is that our destiny is much bigger than our dilemmas. However, though this is hardly new, Mr. de Hegedus does come home with a solid fact: it is the nation-state which makes war, and not the economic system; war is the state's peculiar form of production.

Asher Byrnes is author of "Revolution Comes of Age," "Government Against the People," and "The Day's Work," a long narrative poem.

Portrait of a Literary Agent

LET ME DO THE TALKING. By Richard Mealand. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1947. 275 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by HARRISON SMITH

IT IS difficult to know whether the novels that have appeared recently satirically dissecting radio advertising, motion picture making, the prize fight racket, and now, the literary agent, are to be taken seriously or dismissed as distorted vaudeville representations of the business of amusing and obfuscating the American public. Certainly, Richard Mealand's "Let Me Do the Talking" has an undercurrent of seriousness, if not of bitterness. Gabriel, the literary agent who is always blowing his own and his clients' horns, is a distillation of everything that a literary agent might be if he had the superhuman energy to sit up drinking most of the night, and then go to bed to read a dozen or so manuscripts before he went to his office in the morning, providing he also had the mental agility of a rhesus monkey, the diabolic ingenuity of a kleptomaniac, and the contempt for truth of a ward politician. Most publishers and authors know literary agents as more serious and more informed men and women than Charles Gabriel pretended to be. The actual reason why Mr. Gabriel said, "Let me do the talking," was that some sanity might creep into the conversation if he stopped. In practice he could not have read those dozen manuscripts he took to bed along with his muddled head; his eyes could have only taken in a few paragraphs and the succinct report from an office reader.

In five minutes any first-rate author would have tagged him off base when he tried to discuss his work seriously, and would have begun to lose confidence in him as his representative from that very moment. There must be something of Gabriel's horn in every successful agent, the optimistic belief in an idea he may not have thoroughly studied that would overwhelm the lack of confidence of an honest writer or the doubts of editors and publishers. But Gabriel was more than this; he could create a whole tapestry out of a few bright threads, carve out of the toughest wood a figure that could come to life for a profitable, if brief, period of time, catch ideas like gnats out of the air, and yet have the wits to beat the chiselers who tried to horn in on his authors and his contracts. Gabriel, in fact, is a genius at his profession, and it is perhaps fortunate for American literature that there is no one in this limited profession quite as good, or as bad, as Mr. Mealand has made him.

—Eugene N. Bunting.

"Richard Mealand has chased authors and agents and has been pursued by them."

The serious aspect to "Let Me Do the Talking" is the dubious morality of making a sharper's and a gambler's paradise out of the work of our writers. There are plenty of successful magazine and book authors who may have mortgaged their careers to these fantastic practices and who were delighted to hand over their probity to a financial adventurer. The process of exploitation of mediocre, banal and meretricious ideas may begin with an agent and his author, but it can be continued in publishers' advertising and magazine ballyhoo, and progress from there to the radio and the motion pictures until it seems to embrace a whole world of false conceptions and lying sentimentality. It may seem for a time to be a bright world, but it is, nevertheless, a prolonged daydream, from which the awakening can be as dangerous as if it had been induced by hashish or opium.

In Mr. Mealand's story no one is victimized except Gabriel himself. He met a poised and beautiful young woman who had come straight from Wisconsin to New York because she thought she had a talent for the stage, or maybe that she could write. His Pygmalion instincts came to life; he conceived of recreating her personality and appearance and changed her name from the utilitarian Barbara Jean Mudge, to one word, Brigit. At the same time he was performing successfully another miracle; while he was making Brigit into a successful model deluged with Hollywood offers, he was hacking away at the slick and slightly stilted figure of the son of the most reputable literary agent in the East. Nathaniel Peck, Jr., became, to his father's dismay, a national figure, with the aid of a talented ghost writer, Gabriel, stolen from Mr. Peck, Sr. The young man had acquired his Oxford accent from a few years in England; he was as superciliously handsome as a young god, sure-fire for the lecture platform, the movies, or anywhere else where the looks of a writer can influence public opinion. With his ghost-written book, a violent attack on American education about which he knew nothing, Gabriel was able to crack open a hostile publisher's prejudice against agents. The reader can guess the rest. Gabriel had fallen in love with his Galatea, and Brigit was willing to give herself to him, with or without matrimony. He was left to survey dismally his own shriveled soul for a brief moment before another young woman, a *New Yorker* writer, fell under his eyes.

The fact is that men like Gabriel,

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the busy idea-hounds, the promoters of quick notions, have no time for their souls, for the satisfaction of their bodies, or especially for marriage. Brigit, being a sensible girl, would have run away from him in two years. He had no time for himself or for any single person; his nights and days and his mind itself were in pawn to his authors, rival agents, and to his own schemes. Though incredibly successful, he is actually a pathetic figure. It says a good deal for Mr. Mealand's talent as a beginning novelist that he has been able to create this somewhat dishonest and obnoxious man and to give him pathos and the kind of egotistic determination to succeed, to see his dreams come true, that is actually admirable.

Mr. Mealand knows his subject from A to Z. Over the years he has successfully edited several imposing magazines and has been the story editor for Paramount Pictures. He has chased authors and agents and has been pursued by them; he has been buyer and seller and talent scout. In this book along with his engaging description of a few hectic weeks of Gabriel's life he has presented a whole gallery of characters whose lineaments can be more than dimly recognized by readers who have been themselves in the thick of the literary battle. There is a writer, Drew Dorfield, who is a superb satire on all that can be avaricious, mean, and untrustworthy in the thoroughly spoiled creator of popular novels. There are one or two sharpshooting agents whose real selves are at this moment not far from Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood. In fact, "Let Me Do the Talking" will serve to entertain any reader who wishes to look into a satirical study of merchants of flesh and literature; it will be a whole banquet for those who buy or sell, or who merely turn out the manuscripts that produce this phantasmagoria.

Testament of Wonder

By Louis Ginsberg

IN the meadow where I gazed
There was radiance so bright
That I thought the meadow dazed
With a visionary light.

Such a glory so intense
Every growing thing was under,
It was surely evidence
Of a testament of wonder.

While with rapture everywhere
Earth was answering the sky,
Then it flashed upon me there:
What I gazed upon was—I.

Nocturnal Madness

THE HOUSE OF SLEEP. By Anna Kavan. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1947. 223 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by JOHN WOODBURN

TO AWAKEN in the night is to undergo a metamorphosis. The citizen who retires, secure and ritualistic, teeth cleaned, prayers said, the window adjusted to the weather, is not the same person who, disturbed by some night-sound, or perhaps by the troubled infant who hides within all of us, rouses from the grave of sleep to stare into the darkness. Lonely and disarmed, the mind runs panting upon the heels of the imagination; the daytime fences are down, the sunlight armor lost, and the citizen who was by day so brave and busy, so scornful and so sure, lies trembling in the terrible arms of the dark, a lost and wondering child, in deepest isolation.

In her three previous books, and now in this one, Anna Kavan has concerned herself with the unbalanced mind, the pathos and terror of the intellect in the tragic act of slipping its tether to reality. It is this tiger of the mind which, like Blake's, burns so brightly, which has fascinated her by its fearsome beauty, and which she has tried to capture in her delicate and discerning prose. This is a brave and unpopular thing for her, or any writer, to attempt, and it is due her to say that she has done it more sensitively, more respectfully, has thrust farther into the wild brilliance and darkness of the world beyond reality than has any writer of her time. To my mind, no contemporary can approach her in the articulation of the esthetics of insanity.

"The House of Sleep" tells of a girl, nameless and glimpsed, rather than known, whose progressive neurosis caused her, first of necessity and finally in exultant volition, to reject the jagged pattern of daytime living for a borderline world which she enters eagerly at night. As a means of elucidating the difficult and demanding architecture of the book, the author has prepared an explanatory preface:

> The creative impulse is the result of tension; without tension life would not exist. If human life be accepted as the result of tension between the two polarities of night and day, the negative pole, night, must have at least equal importance with the positive day.
>
> At night, under the negative influence, subjected to cosmic radiations of a different kind, human affairs are apt to come to a crisis; at night most human beings die and are born.
>
> "The House of Sleep" describes in the nighttime language certain critical stages in the development of one individual human being. No interpretation is needed of the dream tongue we all, as a matter of course, have spoken in sleep and childhood; but for the sake of absolute clearness, a short paragraph at the head of each section indicates the corresponding day situation.

These short, daytime paragraphs are condensed, and dense with association. They trace the path of the reality which the young girl walked in such unhappiness and distaste. Here in luminous, small images, is the essence of her predicament: her fading childhood and the mother who died when the girl was a child; her father, a man of surfaces and brusqueness; the loneliness and separation of her days at school and at the university. They are followed by the passages which report the night-journeys of her freed imagination, high, wandering flights of the richest and most brilliant sort, a bright Cloud Cuckoo Land in which the *id* comes exuberantly to life, with imagination its companion and competitor.

At times, many times, it seems that Anna Kavan is using a private language. The inhibitions of our daytime communication are so strong, we are so conditioned to the unconsciously guarded speech, so much the prisoner of our rational selves, that it is difficult at first to recall the changelings we can become at the borderline of sleep. This is a strange, softly terrifying book. It is difficult not to yield helplessly to its beauty, and it is impossible not to be profoundly disturbed by it. The final and most desperately-defended privacy is that of the secret, inner consciousness, that corridor of the mind through which each of us walks alone; and Anna Kavan invades that privacy brilliantly, humbly, and insistently. She knows a great deal about the tiger of the mind, and it disturbs us to know that she knows.

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Java Drama

SILVER NUTMEG. By Norah Lofts. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1947. 368 pp. $3.

Reviewed by SARA HENDERSON HAY

WHEN Norah Lofts's book went to press, the islands and the peoples of which she wrote were front-page news. The Dutch and the Javanese were fighting again, as they have been off and on for hundreds of years; the romantic names, Banda, Batavia, Sumatra, Soerabaja, rolled trippingly from the tongues of radio commentators. The quarrel is still alive, in our day as it was in 1565, the period of Miss Lofts's book, when the "nutmeg princes" built their great fortunes and their great palaces on the islands of the East Indies, when the precious nutmeg was as jealously guarded as if it had been the silver nutmeg of the old nursery rhyme, when the Dutch East India Company and the British East India Company squabbled over contracts and concessions, and the constant threat of native uprisings and massacres shadowed the feudal luxury of the white plantations.

Miss Lofts's story has all the elements of high romance and adventure, a fine rousing tale of love, intrigue, treacherous native rulers, blood, fire, conspiracy, and war. It is romance in the old tradition, starting with an arranged marriage, a "glove marriage" as they were called, between Evert Haan, wealthy planter of the island of Banda, and Annabet Van Goens, daughter of the proud Van Goens, who had been the great family in the village of Janshaven, where Evert and his half-brother Piet had grown up. The Van Goens had lost their fortunes since the day when the old Padroon had taken his riding crop to little Evert for not doffing his cap, and it was a triumph not unsweetened with revenge when Evert, now rich and powerful, could send Piet as his emissary to Holland with a prince's ransom of jewels and a marriage contract for the hand of Annabet. But when Annabet arrived, she was far from the beautiful young bride Evert had expected—a nearly fatal illness had reduced her to a scrawny skeleton of a girl whose appearance shocked and humiliated her husband and turned his expected triumph to bitterness and hatred. Here the action really gets under way with Evert's connivance with the mysterious and sinister Shal Ahmi, a native whose powers encompass black magic as well as sundry other talents, to get rid of the unfortunate Annabet. Shal Ahmi promises to rid Evert of his disappointing bride, but he has his own plans, and instead of quietly murdering her during Evert's absence he restores her to her original beauty and health, whereupon Evert falls in love with her. But by that time Annabet has fallen irrevocably in love with a mysterious Englishman, an undercover business associate of Evert's, who had been playing a double game by doing some smuggling on the side of his legitimate nutmeg exporting. It was a crime punishable

"Norah Lofts's characters follow their stormy path against a background of imperialistic violence and greed."

by death to allow any fertile nutmeg to be taken from the islands, but smuggling went on, by both Dutch and English, who were openly rivals and who were finally to fight it out for control of the islands. Norah Lofts's characters follow their stormy path against a backdrop of imperialistic violence and greed, and added to it are the flames of native rebellion, engineered by Shal Ahmi, who is a deposed Prince of Banda and who has long nursed his plans to double-cross both English and Dutch and seize the islands again for his own people.

"Silver Nutmeg" is an engrossing story, the more exciting and colorful because it is fact, with only its personalities drawn from its author's imagination. As characters they lack the subtlety and delicacy of delineation which so distinguished Miss Lofts's previous book, "Jassy," but subtlety and understatement were perhaps crowded out in this book by its superabundant drama, its swiftness of action, and the complications of its plot. Hammock readers are cautioned herewith to tie themselves in, or they will tumble out from sheer excitement.

Western Clan

THE NEIGHBORS. By Virginia Sorensen. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock. 1947. 311 pp. $3.

Reviewed by ERIC L. MCKITRICK

"TALENT," in the case of Virginia Sorensen, seems to amount to more than just that; with her, sheer technical virtuosity is undeniable, and her third novel shows a clear determination to avoid past errors. Once more her story centers about the doings of a large Western family—that unit which, in her own background, has assumed almost tribal significance.

John Kels, tormented by years of petty failures, by self-guilt at never having dared confront practical provincial competence with his own half-realized idealism, has decided to abandon his Denver school-teaching and settle his family in the range country. Paulie Kels, big, strong, serene, has borne him eight children, the two oldest of whom, Call and Ann, are by this time grown up. In the sheep-herding valley where they have bought the Bird ranch, they find the implacable influence of old Phineas Roe and his loveless family surrounding them everywhere. Roe's struggle to drive John out of the valley is the principal theme, Call's love story and that of Ann being minor skeins in this well-filled tale of family life and inter-family relationships.

It is true that human dignity is turned to better account here than in the author's first two novels. John Kels is a splendid creation, consistent throughout; more than in "A Little Lower Than the Angels" and "On This Star" is character (rather than manufactured irrelevancy) the thrusting force determining people's destinies. "Times like that," she writes at the denouement, "he knew, there is no thinking, no planning, nothing but what a man has become all the years of his life."

On the surface of it, Virginia Sorensen has answered her previous critics pretty well, and this story would probably win her first prize in almost any novel contest. But as Vardis Fisher (who quit trying to "teach" people to write) has intimated, writing for the sake of writing is a devilish thing to shake loose. Form, even formula, may be discerned in the substance of all great writing, but they are inherent, never just pegs on which to hang a yarn. In "On This Star" Mrs. Sorensen affronted her well-wishers by turning a vengeful *deus ex machina* loose on all her

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main characters. "The Neighbors," though higher in stature, shows she still cannot quite resist the temptation to press a few buttons and tidy things up at the end. Furthermore, the three levels on which she seems to write still do not assimilate themselves very well. The serene drama of everyday family life apparently does not in itself carry quite enough kick for her; the real meaning of the Lawrence idiom, the deeply poetic imagery of personal relations which indeed she handles so well, still escapes her; gratuitous melodrama, so out of place in the pastoral scene, she still finds difficult to do without. Ideas and symbols, though themselves brilliantly conceived, remain just a little undigested in terms of time and place.

Mrs. Sorensen, unlike most "practising craftsmen" on the scene, has capability in great abundance. It might be realized as soon as she forgets that she is one of them.

From Snails to God

THE STAIRWAY OF SURPRISE. By William Rose Benét. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. 1947. 274 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by RAYMOND HOLDEN

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT has been presenting his poetry to an appreciative audience for nearly thirty-five years. Thirty-five years is, as things go these days, a long time, yet Mr. Benét is, it seems to me, one of the youngest poets in existence. For he has what a poet badly needs: youth without immaturity. In his thirty-five years as a publishing poet he has seen all sorts of cults and clans, groups and gatherings come and go and he has kept his head and, above all, his heart and has never taken his eyes from the great tradition of English poetry. What is perhaps more important he has kept alive in his work another tradition which has sometimes been lacking even in great English poetry —the tradition of compassionate humanness.

I say this by way of introduction to Mr. Benét's latest volume of poems, though perhaps I say it unnecessarily, since anyone reading the book will find out at least a part of the truth of what I have said. And he will find more. He will find the variety, characteristic of an enthusiast, the nobility of a pure spirit, the color and vividness of an artist who is also a compassionate observer, interested, fiercely, joyously interested in everything from snails to God.

Mr. Benét is not primarily concerned with poetry as an art form. He does not, happily, feel that it is debasing to write poetry which is representational. He is not old-fashioned any more than he is modern. He is first and last a poet, excited by himself and his world, unabashed and prolific, unwounding yet vulnerable, hating injustice, in love with man and all the beauties of man's being.

Mr. Benét's defects as a poet are the defects of a man who is more interested in what his heart compels him to say than in the technicalities of his way of saying it; of a man who is so passionately excited about getting his poem out into man's hearing that he would regard it as foolish to pause for a study of the rightness of commas and semicolons or even of lines and feet. Yet, in case this should seem to say that Mr. Benét falls carelessly short of perfection, let me give you an example of how close he can come to achieving perfection—and does—in "Dark Planet":

Once at the edge of night ere day breaking
I heard a voice say hush to the toiling mind:
Soon will come an end to the long aching
Of hoodman blind.

Earth no more will be steeped in dire murder,
Nation snarl at nation or life betray;
Light will glow in mist on the star-herder
Of the glimmering Way.

Light will shine beyond the grim grapple
Of fear for power, while man forever errs,
As in aeons before and after Eden apple
And the sons of Eve were hers.

Wide awake I lay with my heart quaking,
Feeling the love of the lucky gone before,
While the long relentless surges I heard shaking
A granite shore.

The more highly intellectualized art-poets, who believe, as it is perfectly reasonable to do, that poetry is not a matter of emotional enthusiasm but rather of the creation of something, through language, which did not exist before and can have no existence save in its own particular arrangement of language, may be very scornful of Mr. Benét's generous energy, but he stands as a kind of Shelley of his day, greathearted, richly endowed, and, which cannot be said of many poets in their work, awfully good company.

Lyric Life

BEYOND FIRE. By Rowena Bennett. Warrenville, Ill.: Blue Heron Publishing Co. 1947. 32 *pp.*

THERE are certain modest books of verse that the highly intellectual critics scorn because they, in turn, are not highly intellectual. A good many such books are of mediocre or inferior workmanship. Once in a while the words express just what the minor poet has to say, and convey emotion with a simplicity much more difficult to achieve than the flamboyant mass of metaphors and the tortured enigmas that are so "modern." Sara Teasdale was a poet of this type, and lifted simple verse on the wings of the lyric, the true lyric; and conveyed emotion not only in words that the average reader could understand but with a touch of distinction. Mrs. Bennett cannot, certainly, be ranked with Sara Teasdale; but her small book has lyric life in it. It is not distinguished by unusual language or brilliant freshness of simile, metaphor, or image; but it conveys directly valid emotion without mawkishness. The simple sonnets called "Experience" have sincerity and dignity. The lyric poems about love and children are not coy but express what all lovers and mothers must have felt. These are feminine poems, if you like, and minor; but many, I am sure, could enjoy their courageous delight in life.

E. R.

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The Most Dangerous Man in the World

HENRI BERGSON is to thought what Roosevelt is to action; a fountain of energy—brilliant, terrifying, important. To be sure, he is a quiet professor of philosophy at the Collège de France who writes difficult books on metaphysics, and so far as I know, takes no active part in politics; yet the revolutionary labor groups in France claim him. Though his thinking has been about biology, mathematics, and psychology, people call Bergson an artist.

The universities and the churches are troubled about him; his books sell everywhere. No word he says goes unreported; his recent London lectures were quoted in the American papers. Bergson's name has disturbed and excited politicians, heightened artistic desire, renewed interest in philosophy, and given a faith to thousands of people. His phrases are ringing through modern thought.

The extent of his influence seems a nine days' wonder. At fifty, without the aid of a press agent, he is the most debated figure wherever men are thinking about their destiny. That he has found new truth does not explain it. Others have done that and died unknown; the world is not in the habit of honoring prophets while they live. The reason for his stupendous reputation lies, it seems to me, in this: that Bergson is not so much a prophet as a herald in whom the unrest of modern times has found a voice. He is popular because he says with splendid certainty what thousands of people have been feeling vaguely.

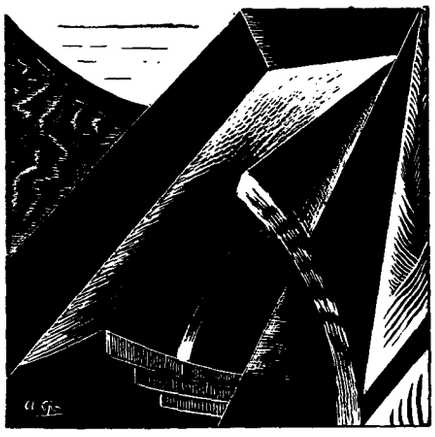
Of the uneasiness and unsettling of the day we are all aware. Radicals call it life; conservatives, death. But whether you rejoice in it or distrust it, you can not ignore it. Things are changing; the world is in doubt; in churches, schools, and governments—wherever men meet, they talk of a tremendous sense of things in the making. Instead of a world once and for all fixed, with a morality finished and sealed, with a constitution to be "interpreted" but never questioned, with parties regularly elected, captains of industry idealized, poverty accepted, learning taken from schools like a pill—we have a world bursting with new ideas, new plans, and new hopes.

This freshness has found its philosopher in Bergson. What is nothing but a shadowy uneasiness in millions of people has become crystal-clear in him. Men are flocking to Bergson because he shows them a world in which their vague and half-formed wants are justified. For the restless desire to find new ways of living and thinking becomes in Bergson, not the fad most people believe it is, but the very principle of life itself. Instead of change being against Nature, standing-pat is; it is the conservatives who violate the spirit of life when they want institutions to stay frozen tight, not the radicals who want them fluid.

Bergson has called his greatest book "Creative Evolution."* In it he asks you to think of all life as very much like your own. You are a part of life after all, and if you realize what it is like for you to be alive, you may get a hint as to the rest of life. When you desire to make something—a city or a poem—your desire and your effort are like Nature's, when she made you. Your city or your poem is never quite what you desired. The missing link, an elephant, and you, are not quite what Nature desired either. Effort is never altogether successful.

And so you go on straining to make other cities and other verses. You have to struggle against the debris and the traditions you made; your houses have to be cleared away before you can build new ones; they are slums now and very troublesome. Your poems have produced professors of poetry.

* *CREATIVE EVOLUTION. By Henri Bergson. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1912. 402 pp. + Index. $1.25.*



NO philosophy ever written is such a deadly enemy to the stand-pat intellect in all its forms. And if I were interested in keeping churches, constitutions, and customs fixed so that they would not change, I should regard Bergson as the most dangerous man in the world. The spread of his teaching will put all institutions on the defensive. For the true Bergsonian always sees life bigger than the rules of living.

Bergson speaks for those who feel that science is becoming at once stodgy and arrogant. They honor science for the practical help it gives us in the business of life. It enables us to feed, house, and clothe ourselves, to cure disease and poverty, to sail the sea and the air, to get about the earth, to control the elements. Science has done much; it promises more. It opens up a prospect of greater power in a future when men shall become masters of the world.

Before the things science can do, the Bergsonians are reverent. They rebel when science claims that it can know all that is worth knowing. There is one thing they say that science can never give—and that is the feeling of life itself. It can tell us how we did something, how we can do something else. It can tell us why the sunset is red, and what causes redness, but the thing you see and actually experience escapes it. Read all the books about the science of sunsets, and they will lack something you can find by looking out of your back window late this afternoon.

So Bergson is the spokesman of those who want the whole of life in all its tantalizing abundance. They are not satisfied with the laws and inventions of science. They want not only the causes of things and their mastery, but the fragrance and the rhythm of them too. They love the perplexing variety of the real world.

—WALTER LIPPMANN.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *This week's "guest editorial" is drawn from an article that appeared thirty-five years ago in the July* 1912 *issue of* Everybody's Magazine. *It is reprinted here not only because of its topical value but because of the interesting and significant juxtaposition of Bergson's ideas and continuing vogue at the close of World War I with the ideas and vogue today of Jean-Paul Sartre, at the close of World War II.*

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Indignant Bystanders

SIR: In your article, "Bystanders Are Not Innocent" [*SRL* Aug. 2] you state:

> One hesitates to conclude that the university is itself a pusillanimous bystander, more concerned about avoiding unwelcome publicity than about justifying the liberal tradition with which it is so often associated.

It seems to me that one can also hesitate to conclude that you are more concerned in shielding the university than you are in exposing the name of this "great American university" in the Midwest.

LOUIS TRUNCELLITO.

West New York, N. J.

SIR: Tell us who our enemies are, Mr. Cousins. As long as generalities, such as a "great American university in the Midwest" are allowed to stand, all Americans must be "bystanders."

I should like to know at what university this incident occurred. I wonder, also, why the newspapers and the wire services didn't carry stories about it. I wonder what happened to the police in this city.

Indifference and fear, per se, are not the foe. The enemy is the *people* who are indifferent, and those afraid to interfere in what is, as you point out, so very much their business. They should be identified. In this case, you can help. That is why I ask that you avoid the role of the bystander.

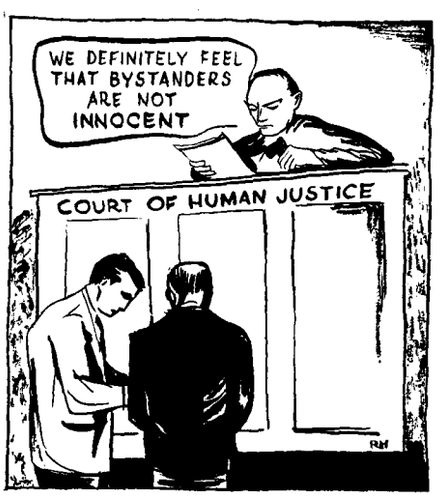
DAOMA WINSTON.

Washington, D. C.

SIR: These are the times when candor and plain speaking are not only virtues but urgent requirements. Your article "Bystanders Are Not Innocent," by Norman Cousins, is a poignant and eloquent statement, hitting hard at an aspect of modern America which is rotten and degraded. It is sad to contemplate that we have come to this—that incidents described in the piece had taken place in the land that only two years ago emerged victorious over fascist and Nazi tyranny.

The story which he wrote needs to be told over and over again until the "innocent bystanders" are roused from their foolish sense of security and awake to the realization that they *are* their brothers' keepers. Too many Americans failed to learn the tragic lesson which the war made clear: that liberty and freedom can disappear unless they continually take safeguards against the corrosive effects of bigotry and hate and prejudice. These fester at the vitals of a free people and unless their manifestations are promptly checked wherever their ugly heads appear they will succeed in destroying our free institutions. Indifference and complacency are dangerous in an era in which not even military victory has been able to halt the forces of fascism and anti-Semitism in their offensive. One cannot remain polite and aloof and refuse to see even the most obvious. The ostrich routine has failed whenever it has been tried in the past.

As a college professor, I appreciated the full impact of the anti-Semitic event which Mr. Cousins states took place at one of our large, liberal Midwestern universities. I know that the trend in our academic institutions is no less frightening to contemplate than in the America outside their cloistered walls. It is shameful that the university in question has apparently decided to ignore the outrageous action of a group of hooligan students. Perhaps it might have resulted in some unfavorable publicity to the institution had it publicized the incident. But it would have rendered a real public service by focusing attention on a sore spot which threatens to assume the proportions of a cancerous growth. It would have fulfilled its highest function as a liberal university had it taken the appropriate disciplinary measures against the guilty students, thereby showing the world that evil in America cannot and must not go unpunished. This Mr. Cousins said it did not do and that, too, is part of the whole disgraceful panorama.



This cartoon appeared under the heading "The Real Culprit," in *The Daily Iowan*, on August 8, 1947.

We cannot be bystanders, neither the persons who stood by while a helpless man was being attacked, nor the university, nor even the writer of the article. Mr. Cousins has, I think, an obligation to make public the name of the institution in question. The episode of the violent anti-Semitic outburst on the campus is perhaps an isolated one, but he can help to dramatize the general seriousness of the problem by naming names in so far as his evidence enables him to do so. Let the university stand accused in public print. These are critical times and little is accomplished by the reluctance to step on someone's toes. The cause of freedom will have been served if everyone connected directly or indirectly with the disgraceful occurrence is compelled to declare himself. Which side of the fence is the innocent bystander on?

PAUL K. BLACKBURN.

SIR: Please make an honest reporter of Mr. Cousins. What "great American university" of the Middle West? What "prominent educator"? What "well known" hotel, and who was the "fellow Nutmegger"? And the dean? Some names, please!

WILLIAM A. GORHAM.

New York, N. Y.

SIR: It seems to me that your article "Bystanders Are Not Innocent" would have been stronger—able to stand on its own legs—if you had from the beginning named names. "Pro-

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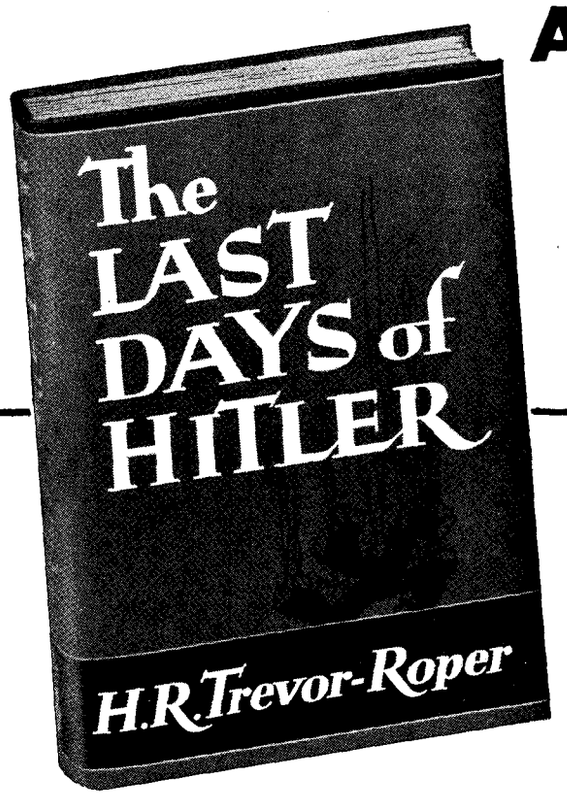
WE DON'T SEE HOW
A BOOK WHEN IT'S V



HOW THIS REMARKABLE BOOK CAME TO BE WRITTEN

In September, 1945, when the whole world was wondering if Hitler was dead, H. R. Trevor-Roper was ordered by the British government to find the *truth.* In THE LAST DAYS OF HITLER, Trevor-Roper tells *completely* for the first time the appalling and intensely dramatic story of the last days in the life of the man who had thrown Europe into bloodshed. The characters in this latter-day Götterdämmerung include Hitler's fantastic court of toadies, quack doctors, astrologers, and would-be betrayers. Enacted against a grotesque background — an underground bunker in the heart of Berlin — the story culminates in the suicides and ritual burning of Hitler and Eva Braun, and the dispersal of the rest of the court in a vain attempt to break through the Russian lines. The *facts* in THE LAST DAYS OF HITLER, hitherto unrevealed, would in themselves make this a fascinating book. But Trevor-Roper, who is an Oxford historian, has written the story in such a vivid and dramatic way, with such a wealth of psychological insight into the characters involved (as the excerpt printed here shows) that THE LAST DAYS OF HITLER should become a classic of its kind.

ENDPAPER MAP **ILLUSTRATED**

It was five o'clock when the tea-party began, a headquarters. Conversation was naturally about into recrimination. . . . Hitler and Mussolini sat scene, while Graziani told them of his Africa mentioned that other famous "plot" in Nazi hi Immediately Hitler leapt up in a fit of frenzy, be revenged on all traitors. Providence had ju chosen to make world history; and he ranted — all of them would be thrown into concent

against divine Providence. The court silent as the Fuehrer raged for a full h hour; the visitors thought he must mad. . . . Mussolini looked embarras and said nothing; Graziani sought fe to break the spell by beginning a techr discussion with Keitel; and all the t footmen, dressed in white, circulated with t tea-pots among the gaping worshippers.

This scene was interrupted by a call from Be

where order had not yet been resto Hitler seized the telephone and shou his orders into the mouthpiece, giving orders to shoot anyone and every Why hadn't Himmler arrived yet? T came the portentous statement of megalomaniac: "I'm beginning to d whether the German people is worthy of my g ideals."

The L

THE *Complete* STORY TC

Lack of space prevents a complete listing of the contents of this exciting book. Here are the highlights:

HITLER AND HIS COURT. True nature of Nazi government and of Nazism—The flight of Hess—Bormann—Goering—Goebbels—Himmler—The rise of Himmler—Decline of Himmler and rise of Bormann—Hitler remains undisputed master of all.

HITLER IN DEFEAT. The "Werewolves"—Hitler's "Diary"—Change in Hitler's habits: he becomes a neurotic recluse—Hitler's doctors—Professor Morell and his drugs—Hitler's hypnotism and bloodlust.

THE COURT IN berg saps Himmle ler—Schellenberg tion of Hitler—H Eva Braun—Cou Krosigk and his di

CRISIS AND DECI vous collapse—Hit plan suicide—Dism Goering—Further dissuade Hitler — Berlin.

THE SIEGE OF TH effects of life in th council—Suspicion

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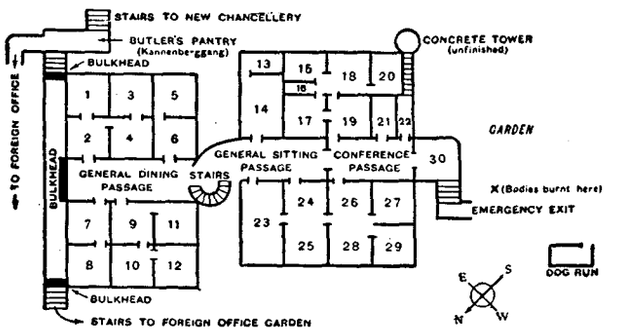
ANYONE CAN RESIST READING RITTEN AS VIVIDLY AS THIS—

ıe whole court assembled in the Fuehrer's Fuehrer's escape, but it quickly deteriorated t and reserved, as if mere spectators of the ventures. Then, quite suddenly someone — the Roehm plot of 30th June 1934. . . . foam on his lips, and shouted that he would own him once again, he screamed, that he had been / about terrible punishments for women and children ı camps — none should be spared who set himself

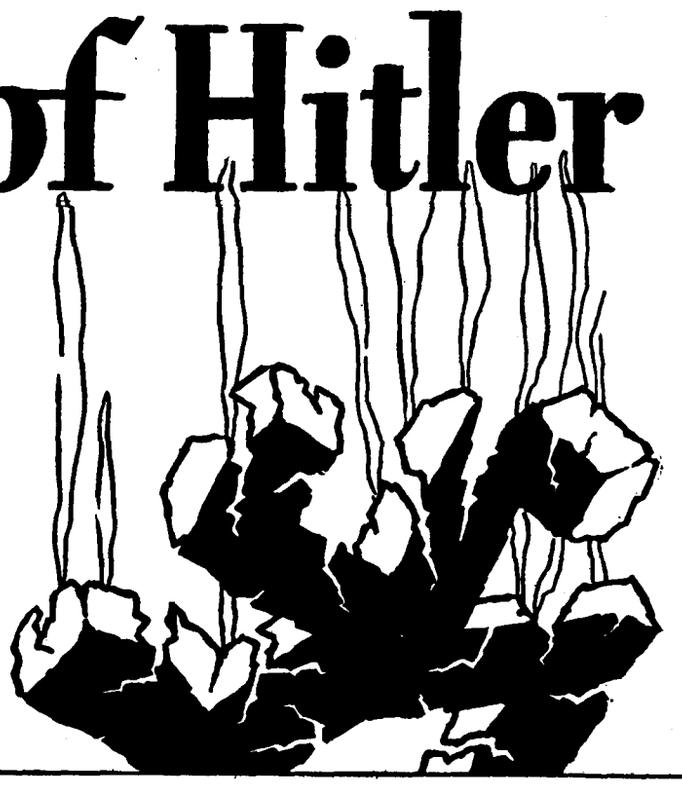
These words broke the spell of silence. At once the entire court competed to speak, each protesting his loyalty. In grovelling terms Doenitz sang the praises of the German Navy. Goering began a violent quarrel with Ribbentrop and made a pass at him with his field-marshal's baton; and the voice of Ribbentrop was heard above the tumult protesting, "I am still Foreign Minister and my name is *von* Ribbentrop." Only Hitler was silent now. The parts in the comic opera had been reversed, and the *prima donna* ceased, while the chorus discordantly sang. He sat still; in his hand he had a tube of brightly coloured pastilles which he continually sucked; only at intervals, like a still spluttering volcano, would he utter some savage phrase, the residue of his unexpended emotion, about blood and Providence, and concentration camps.



KEY TO PLAN OF HITLER'S BUNKER

1-4 *Diaetkueche* (Kitchen, scullery, etc.)
5-6 Lumber rooms
7-8 Servants' quarters
9-12 Frau Goebbels' and children's rooms
13 Electric light switchboard
14 W.C.s
15 Private bathroom
16 Eva Braun's dressing-room
17 Eva Braun's bed-sitting room
18 Hitler's study
19 Anteroom to Hitler's suite
20 Hitler's bedroom
21 "Map room" or small conference room
22 "Dog bunker" or guards' rest room
23 Power house (Diesel engine)
24 Telephone and guard room (also used by secretaries)
25 Emergency telephone exchange
26 Drawing room
27 Goebbels' bedroom (previously used by Morell)
28-29 Stumpfegger's rooms
30 Anteroom and cloakroom

st Days of Hitler



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ET TU BRUTE. Astrological diplomacy—Secret conference in the Bunker—Execution of Fegelein—Marriage of Hitler and Eva Braun—Hitler's two testaments—Goebbels' appendix to Hitler's political testament.

THE DEATH OF HITLER. Hitler hears of the death of Mussolini—The dogs are destroyed—Hitler's farewell to his staff—Bormann orders more executions—Funeral preparations—Suicide of Hitler and Eva Braun—The burning of the bodies—Secret disposal of the remainders—Fate of Bormann—Fate of other fugitives—Suicide of Himmler—The end.

LECTION FOR AUGUST

MACMILLAN

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fessor Mueller" might be left nameless. But why could not the American observer, the prominent educator, the Ohio university, the other great American university, the state in the Midwest, the well-known hotel, the fellow Nutmegger, one of the deans, the degenerate young hooligans "whose identities could so easily be ascertained"—why could not each of these have been identified?

It seems to me you as an individual citizen, well aware of your own influence, have made here only a helpless gesture and rhetorical defense. Why not use the power and influence of your name and leadership to name one by one these you have brought anonymously to the attention of your readers? "What can I do?", do you ask yourself? Surely *you* are not "limited by your imagination, energy, and conscience." Can you as a bystander "claim exemption"?

IDA HIMES.

New York, N. Y.

SIR: Why cannot Mr. Cousins and *SRL* follow the example of the Negro press which, in the weekly story of the brutalities daily inflicted on our Negro fellow citizens, long ago ceased to write anonymously?

REV. GEORGE JOHNSON.

Wilmington, Del.

SIR: Because this editorial is important, and the point of view is important, I respectfully challenge you to name in print the university where this incident occurred.

CLOYD HEAD.

Chicago, Ill.

SIR: . . . In the first place, I don't believe the story you told to be true. . . . What kind of a coffee shop was it anyway that would stand for such goings-on? I was always taught that you had to behave yourself when you were in a public place or you would get thrown out on your ear . . . I can't understand how in just an unselected group of bystanders you could manage to get them all of such a low caliber. If you went right out and tried to find men or women like that you maybe could but how it could have occurred in this instance is not understandable.

In the second place, why didn't the "Greek scholar" himself prefer charges against the group of ruffians? Surely he must know that it is his right. Perhaps he does not realize that it is his duty. He may see his duty differently than I see mine, but I would not feel that I was being fair to the rest of the community or to the boys themselves if they were not brought to time for such acts.

In the third place . . . in what way are you different than the "bystanders" for failing to point the finger? You may not have been an eye-witness to the proceedings but you sure were Johnny-on-the-spot.

The scholar has on his side the uplift of having been a martyr in the whole fracas. The boys, however, have gotten away with something that is brutish and hateful and will leave a scar nothing can erase. If they have a change of heart and mend their ways there will always be that ugly blemish to haunt them. If they don't have a change of heart they have gotten a pretty good giddyap down the wrong side of the tracks. And you didn't do anything about it!!! So why blame me?

GRACE CARLSON.

Reed City, Mich.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *We are glad of the opportunity to state the reasons behind the decision to omit actual names of persons and places, for we admit the apparent paradox that we should ourselves appear to be overly circumspect in an article criticizing the circumspect bystander. The decision was not an easy one; and we are grateful to the many* SRL *readers who took the trouble to write about the article —more than half of them asking for an explanation of what seemed to them to be significant omissions.*

In the first draft of the article, we actually did go into a bill of particulars. But that resulted in throwing the entire article heavily out of balance. In dealing with an episode of this type, the moment the writer gets beyond the general outlines into actual names, he is in much the same position as an official investigator. He must be prepared to present all the evidence, and not only the main facts of the case. Obviously we were in no position to undertake that type of investigation. Nor did we want people to take issue with certain of the details, thus diverting attention from the main point of the episode. We were able to satisfy ourselves concerning the truth of the general facts of the attack; that was enough for our purposes.

Second, we were afraid that specific

AND NO ONE AROSE IN SOCIETY'S NAME

. . . There are two questions involved here. First, who bears the responsibility for taking action against the violators—the victim or the city, county, and university authorities? Second, why did the incident remain unpublished for nearly three months, to be aired finally by a New York editor?

This second question is one for the newspapers covering Iowa City (including ourselves) to worry about. We need not quarrel with each other. There is enough shame to go around. It is the other question that is crucial.

The breaking of a contract is a wrong against an *individual*. He has the right to call in society to protect his interests if he wants to, but he can suffer the wrong passively if he wants to.

The committing of a murder is a wrong against *society*. Society has no choice but to take action—not because of regard for the slain, or because of pity for the sorrowing, but because of the need to protect *all other members* of society.

The responsibility for taking action in this particular case of assault was the responsibility of the city, county, and university authorities, not the responsibility of the victim. The assault was a wrong against society.

Suppose the assault had involved robbery of the man by two other men; would the police and the county attorney have insisted on the *victim's* pressing charges before taking any action? Suppose the assault had involved drunkenness by two university students; would the university officials have insisted on the *victim's* pressing charges before taking action?

We think the answers to these questions are clear. So we ask another:

Why is assault motivated by robbery or drunkenness a wrong against the public, but assault motivated by intolerance a wrong against a private person?

* * *

A democratic society is far more vulnerable to intolerance than it is to robbery and alcohol. The bystanders, the police, and the university officials have all assumed the role of the sympathetic neutral.

But they were *not* neutrals. Whether they know it or not, they were *participants* on one side or the other.

During the 1930's the world witnessed the fallacy of neutrality in international relations. The nation that was "neutral" toward one crime soon became the victim of the next crime.

The situation is the same in domestic relations. Those who do not effectively resist anarchy will one day become its victims.

Under civilized life, all individuals are allied to protect each other. An act against a member of a minority is an act against each individual in society, just as murder is a threat to the life of every man. For we are all members of one or many "minorities" at one time or another —economic, political, religious, or otherwise.

This is the interpretation of the incident which one would justly expect from the police of Iowa City and the Johnson county attorney. It is an interpretation which is imperative upon the officials of a great university, whose concern should always be with high morality and straight thinking.

—*From a lead editorial, August* 9, 1947, *in* The Des Moines Register.

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identifications would nourish the human tendency to breathe a sigh of relief once an individual learns that the trouble is at a distance. What we described could happen anywhere, and we were anxious to have universities in general re-examine their own position on this issue. We thought it might be healthy if not one but a number of schools would try on the shoe to see if it fits. It is perhaps not irrelevant to point out that the quota system now in operation in many universities is not entirely divorced from the central issue discussed in the article.

In short, the theme of the article was much broader than the coffee-shop incident; our purpose was to draw upon an illustration without having the illustration swallow up the article itself.

Third, and finally, we were hopeful that the initiative in publicizing a bill of particulars in connection with the incident itself would come from within the university itself—a development which, as may be observed from the following letter, has now actually taken place. N. C.

SIR: As editor of *The Daily Iowan*, I am most anxious to identify the locale of the incident reported in the Aug. 2 issue of *SRL* under the heading of "Bystanders Are Not Innocent." We are grateful to you for the opportunity to make the identifications ourselves. You may be interested to learn that the article and the events flowing out of it have been headline news throughout the state.

The incident of which you spoke occurred in Iowa City, Iowa, on the night of May 6, 1947. Though details of the beating may vary, your account is substantially correct. Mr. E. S. Cooper, a teacher at the local Hebrew School, has since identified himself as the victim of the attack. But in a press interview, he said he would "stand by my conscience" and would not bring charges against his assailants. He asked, "Why should I prosecute these young men for something that is basically the fault of the country's education system? I believe that erring youth should be reached through methods of education and religion rather than through legal punishment. It is not their fault as much as the fault of the schools, the churches, and the home."

"Everyone has the same curse," he said. "Nearly everyone in the country, if he will admit it, feels the same way about Hebrews and other minority groups. One simply does not know the nature of a New Englander, which I am, if he thinks a whole community can prevail upon him to do that which he thinks is uncalled-for and vindictive. I will stand by my conscience."

I have had a long talk with Mr. Cooper. In so far as he is a man of great principles and scholarly religious attitudes, he is to be greatly admired.

I cannot agree, however—and this is the stated position of this newspaper—that he has the moral right to refuse to cooperate with authorities who are attempting to make an investigation of this brutal attack. In a society which depends on law and order, we simply cannot allow one individual to decide that violence can be condoned.

County Attorney Jack C. White has begun an investigation of the attack. Despite Mr. Cooper's refusal to cooperate, the investigation will go on. Mr. Cooper told me that there were other witnesses, who can be located and who should be required to relate their knowledge of what happened.

There is also the question of how energetic the police department was in investigating this case at the time. It is incredible to think that by the time a squad car arrived at the scene from the police station only a few blocks away "no one would be around"—which is the way the police explain failure to investigate.

Although the university cannot be entirely excused for its failure to investigate the matter thoroughly, their efforts definitely were complicated by Mr. Cooper's refusal to cooperate. I know that on repeated occasions, the dean's office sent messages to Mr. Cooper through personal friends to explain the matter to the university. He simply ignored them and told me that he ignored them because he considered it "a closed case."

The outstanding moral of your article cannot be escaped. There were plenty of bystanders, and only one attempted to halt the beating. That man suffered cuts and bruises himself.

Those who stood by must surely bear the brunt of a guilt at least as great as those who actually struck the blows.

R. BRUCE HUGHES
Editor, *The Daily Iowan*.
Iowa City, Iowa.

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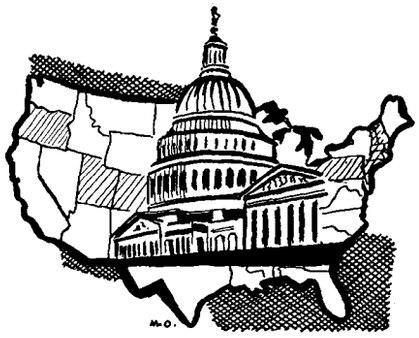
Life Begins in the Thirties

THE BRIGHT PROMISE. By Richard Sherman. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1947. 373 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by WALTER HAVIGHURST



USUALLY you can see what a novelist started with, when his book first began its accretion in his mind. It began with a certain apprehension of character, or a certain pattern of experience, or a certain relationship and the course it had to run. That is what the yet unwritten novel was to be about, and the author went on to give it a setting, a set of circumstances, a flow of experience.

It is no feat of mind-reading to see that Mr. Sherman's novel began with a highly abstract interest. He wanted to tell a story of the "Roosevelt era," not about Roosevelt but about some people whose lives were affected by a man they never saw. The Roosevelt period began on that weighty, sodden morning in March, 1933, with words about having nothing to fear but fear and with the closing of the nation's banks. On that day Mr. Sherman's story begins. It ends on the day the Roosevelt casket was carried into the White House.

"The Bright Promise" is a story of a period, and the author is less interested in Amy and Lyle Ellery for themselves than for the influence he can trace through twelve years of their lives. That interest dictates that they should take their marriage vows while the words of Roosevelt's Inaugural are still fresh in their ears and that their wedding trip should be canceled by the bank holiday. It dictates that polio should wither the legs of their young son.

Two New Yorkers, indistinguishable from the swarm of the city's career-seekers, Amy and Lyle Ellery have their ups and downs, indicated by their successive removals from Macdougal Street to Tudor City, to Sutton Place, to Jackson Heights, to the home of Amy's parents in an Iowa town, and back to New York again. Beginning as a minor staff writer on a smart magazine, Lyle dreams up the novel idea of a picture weekly and becomes its editor. After trouble with his publisher he is on relief, writing for the *New York Guide*, and then he is a small-town man taking over his father-in-law's country paper in Iowa. Finally he is back, triumphantly, in New York, and then overseas with the Army.

All this is told by Amy. It is told earnestly and thoughtfully, and her feeling gives it color and warmth. We sense her essential loyalty to her small-town background and her strong attachment to New York. We understand her concern over her husband's selfishness and her sympathy with his eventual idealism. We recognize her relation to her parents and to her stricken son. But these things gain nothing from being superimposed on the events of the Roosevelt regime. The book is Amy's "history," and like any woman's life, in the Roosevelt period or another, it is made up of problems.

Mostly the problems concern her husband—his frustration with a meaningless job, his infidelity, his too-rapid success and its too abrupt ending, his too-complete immersion in small-town life, and finally his ignorance of his son's illness. There is the quality of a long sigh in this narrative, a sense of looking back.

Though he is absorbed in detailing their uneven fortunes, it is hard to think that these people interest Mr. Sherman deeply. They are middle-of-the-road people, ambitious to a degree, intelligent within limits, capable of living in Ammon, Iowa, or in New York with moderate satisfaction. Mr. Sherman's interest in them is that they mirror, like a hand-glass catching a scrap of sun, the Roosevelt who stood astride their time. They mirror tardily—they ride high during the peak of unemployment, and when they descend there is little of the social bewilderment and the shattering self-doubt that afflicted the middle Thirties—but the reflection grows bright when Lyle takes his stand against isolationism and young Johnny, lying in the hospital, becomes a hero-worshipper of the stricken President.

The multitude who will read this novel, and the greater multitude who will see the Ellerys on the screen, will be given no added understanding of human nature. But they will relive the poignant and crucial experiences of the past fifteen years—the chagrin of working on a Federal project, the going home to live with parents, the numbing news of Pearl Harbor, the farewell to a husband in uniform, and the blinding joy of his return. And they will be startled at the nearness of distant things that happened only yesterday.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Summing Up*	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Verdict*
THE RING AND THE LAMP *William Rollins* (Simon & Schuster: $2.50)	Sgt. Ross, P. O. W. freed by surrendering Nazis, takes note to Paris for fellow-soldier, and gets enmeshed in multi-murder plot.	Doggedly resourceful American's adventures with Parisian killers and post-war "big-business" plotters are exciting, surprising, occasionally incredible, and thoroughly readable.	Good thriller
A NAME FOR EVIL *Andrew Lytle* (Bobbs, Merrill: $2.50)	Ghost of wicked old Southern planter leads to tragedy in family of present-day plantation owner.	Begins as out-and-out ghost story, then undergoes some strange changes and winds up spookier than ever.	Puzzling
MURDERER'S MISTAKE *E. C. R. Lorac* (Mystery House: $2)	Articles missing from lonely cottage arouse suspicions of English farmer. He advises Scotland Yarder Macdonald who turns up corpse and killer.	Accept initial coincidence and here is attractively written and reasonably baffling rural-English yarn acted by believable and interesting people.	Good
TOO LATE FOR TEARS *Roy Huggins* (Morrow: $2.50)	Bagful of currency chucked into California couple's car leads to husband's murder, wife's continued villainy and her final inevitable failure.	Gal is so thoroughly and cleverly wicked that reader may regret she doesn't get away with it! Finish is weakest part.	Hard-boiled chiller

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Filthy, Weary War

YANK: The GI Story of the War. By the Staff of Yank. *New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce.* 1947. 317 *pp.* $5.

Reviewed by E. J. KAHN, JR.

ONLY two years after V-E Day, such place names as Eniwetok and Bougainville, Schweinfurt, and Torgau, are already becoming dim geographical milestones in the memories of Americans for whom, not so long ago, they had vital significance. Before too much longer, probably few Americans, outside of geographers and some veterans, will be able to state with assurance the precise difference between, say, the Marshall Islands and the Marianas.

Yank's gifted and peripatetic staff of correspondents, all enlisted men, covered a lot of ground during the war, and this collection of their observations of their travels is a useful reminder of the details of warfare that are so easy for a nation at peace to forget. Here are economically worded, accurate, vivid, and moving reminders for all of us of New Guinea ("The only way things can be carried here is on your back"); of Cisterna ("There were curious mounds where houses had been and separate walls that looked like monuments and odd twisted bundles of clothes lying all around"); of Normandy (" 'His brains splattered all over my face,' Kwitek said. 'I never was so sick in all my life.' "); of Remagen ("Cross the Rhine with dry feet courtesy of 9th Armd Div," reads the sign showing in the photograph of the bridge approach). There is a sharp pictorial reminder, in two facing photographs of soldiers relaxing in Germany and on Okinawa, that war, from the point of view of the man actually fighting it, is weary, filthy, objectionable, and dreadfully similar no matter where it happens to be taking place.

All of *Yank's* correspondents wrote from personal experience. "A brick landed on the head of the boy next to me," reported Sgt. Howard Brodie about the time he took cover in a grainshed at the Roer. "We couldn't see for the cloud of choking dust. Two doughs had their arms around each other; one was sobbing. More MG tracers ripped through the wall, and another shell. I squeezed between

several bags of grain." Some of *Yank's* correspondents' reports had to be incomplete. Corporal Bob Krell was killed by a German rifleman while covering an airborne operation, twelve hours after he had filed a preliminary story that concluded, "They will get the same old butterflies. But they'll all jump. And when they hit the ground they will get down to cases."

This book is presented as a "chronological account of the GI's war." As such, it suffers a trifle from the obvious difficulty the editors had in trying to arrange in more or less orderly sequence events that took place concurrently all over the world; one suspects that the editors were hard pressed deciding when to skip from Europe to the Pacific, or from the ground to the air, or when to drop in tangentially at Panama or Iran. As a chronology, too, the book suffers from an insufficiency of dates and from a complete lack of maps. In putting the book together, its editors have wisely made it supplementary, in large part, to "The Best from Yank," an anthology published in 1945, which contained no items of later vintage than the fall of 1944. More than half of the contents of the present volume date from then on, and the repetition of features from the earlier collection is thus commendably slight. Having two such books—each an important catalogue of important events—available for the refreshing of our memories is a privilege for which all of us should be glad.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. "The Tempest." 2. "Twelfth Night." 3. "Much Ado About Nothing." 4. "A Midsummer Night's Dream." 5. "Love's Labour's Lost." 6. "The Merchant of Venice." 7. "As You Like It." 8. "The Taming of the Shrew." 9. "The Comedy of Errors." 10. "King John." 11. "Henry IV 1." 12. "Richard III." 13. "Henry VIII." 14. "Julius Caesar." 15. "Cymbeline." 16. "Pericles." 17. "King Lear." 18. "Macbeth." 19. "Hamlet." 20. "Othello."

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Strictly Personal

SLAUNCHWISE AND CATAWAMPUS

THE idea came to me when one of the hillbilly gals in "Sing Out, Sweet Land" came downstage, planted herself like Ethel Merman, and asked a visitor to the stage party, "How's about you givin' us a song, Stranger?" The next night I heard Ed Gardner in Duffy's Tavern say, "Leave us face it," and that clinched the matter. When a couple of years ago, "Piccalilli on the Vernacular" had appeared in the *SRL*, correspondents from all over had sent me joy-spreading samples of the common speech. Certainly I owed it to my patriotism to paint my innards with a Montana Twister—I mean I owed it to my patriotism to record these verbal didoes, before the radio had stripped all the bark off our speech. Our future citizens would like to know how the American backwoodsman took the English language and made it sound like his cabin and clearing looked.

The force of speech romps in its verbs, and the common man who makes the language — for language grows from the bottom—enjoys his juicy dialect verbs. He *renches* out his shirt, *wrops* up a package, *whups* his woman. He sings them too. Crossing the creek on a hickory log one day, he fell in and got plenty wet, but he helt to his little brown jug you bet! Where the literary language has only *held*, the dialect has a dozen forms to pick from.

The American dialect seeks strength and finds it in what is well named the strong verb. Tom, Dick, and Harry favor *gruv* over *grieved*, in general tend to make weak preterites into strong. In Vermont the dialect past tense of *weed* is *wed:* "I wed the garden this morning"; in upper New York State I have heard *quat* for *quitted:* "He quat his job yesterday"; and in Boston the strong form *shew* for *showed* used to be as common as beans, but one never hears it now. A South Carolina rhyme introduces its cousin to rhyme with blew:

The rain it rained, the wind it blew
The hail it hailed, the snow it snew;
And I wuz fo' hundred miles away
from home.

The same urge to say *drug* rather than *dragged* gave us "I should have stood home," an expression so common among the illiterate it has become almost proverbial.

But by all odds my favorite folk coinage of strong preterites came from a correspondent in Palo Alto, California. One day down in Tennessee, my correspondent writes, Hillbilly Ed drove his battered Ford past Bill without speaking. Later Bill bawled out his crony for it. "Why, say now," drawled old Ed, "if I'd 'a' knowed that was you I would of retch out and wove."

When you tell that one, reach out and wave.

Another way to spice speech is to fool the ear, say what the listener does not expect, pour him corn instead of rye. So sometimes the dialect puts the weak verb form where the strong form ought to be. Jesse Stuart's mountain people say, "I drinked that quart of moonshine and I winned that fight," while out in Oklahoma the young folks at their playparties sing and dance:

I wish't I was'd a granger,
And with the granger band,
With a haystack on my shoulder
An' a pitchfork in my hand.

Mix 'em up, show 'em the black when they expect the red, that's the system. So the vernacular makes verbs outen nouns and nouns outer verbs. The Negro in the exaltation of the religious revival stretched out his arms for a verb to sing of the infant Moses and found it in a children's game:

We kin' almos' see de baby
Hide-an'-seekin' 'round de throne.

In devil-may-care accents a celebrated troop of Confederate cavalry sang:

Fol de rol de day, fold de rol de day,
The Black Horse cavalry a-coming;

You needn't mind the weather, we'll
all get drunk together,
And spree around the Happy Land of
Canaan.

Not to be outdone the Union forces clipped the tail off a noun and damned old Jeff Davis with the runty relic: "And when we hang the traitor, he'll never trait again."

Misery as well as joy has its coinages. The above process in reverse—the making of a noun out of a verb—is eloquent in

You'se a dirty mistreater
And you mistreats me all the time,

an adaptation, which, on the analogy of *backslider* out of *backslide*, foals *mistreater* out of *mistreat*. The woman who sang that her man was treatin' her mean was a Chicago Negress. Deb Hawkins, a Yankee white woman, was the misliker who drew *misliken* out of its seed verb. At the altar, when the Deacon asked her would she take Sam Hopeful for her lawful wedded husband, she said, "No." "Why?" asked Sam. "Because I have taken a misliken to you," replied the lady.

A man may have broke the heart of the woman who called him a dirty mistreater and Sam surely had his busted wide open by the girl who left him at the altar, but no dame could dent the heart of the troubador who gaily caroled his defiance in dialect:

I have a lover in Sourwood,
She's gone cripply and blind;
She broke the heart of many a poor
feller,
But she ain't broke this'n of mine.

The triumph in that last line is like the sun breaking over the rim of Sourwood Mountain. It's got a smile as big as a slop bucket.

A traveler asking his way in a swampy region of Iowa was told, "Go in slaunchwise and keep on going catawampus," which is equivalent to saying, "Go in sorter slanticular and keep on a-goin' kinder cattycorner-like." So do adverbs spice the verbs of the American vulgate. I well remember a Kentucky mountain woman's use of that word *slaunchwise*, which gives such a chick, crunchy sound to *slantwise*. Comparing the length of her first train with the crowd of people waiting to meet it, she remarked to her neighbor, "Great God A-Mighty, it's a good thing that air contraption didn't come in slaunchwise!" Catawampus, which as a noun also, means a sprite or hobgoblin, stirs memories of the Gallywampus and Whifflecat and all the other fiends of the Forties who have gone where the Whangdoodle mourneth for her first-born and the Philly-too-bird sings sad songs to its mate.

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Only the Whiffenpoof baa-baas on at Yale.

Dialect connectives result in some queer jointed sentences. *E'en a'most* for *almost* was popular with our ancestors, who when they wanted to say a man swore like Sam Hill said, "He swore e'en amost like a woodpile." But for good old backyonder dialect flavor *iffen* for *if* is a good many huckleberries above the persimmons of all the other little linking words. It's got the bucksaw whine in it. A classic use of *iffen* sings in the Champ Clark song of the Democratic Convention of 1912:

Ever' time I come to town
The boys keep kickin' my dawg aroun'.
Even iffen he is a houn'
They got t'quit kickin' my dawg aroun'!

This pulling-out of *if* to *iffen* seems to be part of an instinct among the folk to strengthen little words by addition, for fear they'll get lost in the shuffle. "Ussuns have nothing to do with hern," thus the voice of morality in an Arkansas holler lengthens two little words to give them body and space. In a like manner *less* gets stretched out to *lessen:* "I don't see no way to get there lessen a man's to wait a few days." The girl who called through the door, "You-all can't come in: I ain't dressed fitten for a party," was building up two little words in one breath. Incidentally, *you-all* and *you-uns* are native productions. So are *iffen* and *lessen.* But the great body of our dialect forms, most of which now seem to us as American as two bits, are inheritances from old English.

The folk speech also has a tendency to strengthen the ends of things, to build up the close of sentences. So the old Kentucky "Where are you from outer?" for "Where do you hail from?" piles up three prepositions where the schoolmarms say none ought to be, and "Where is he at?" gives the voice a fine chance to bear down on the atness of whereness.

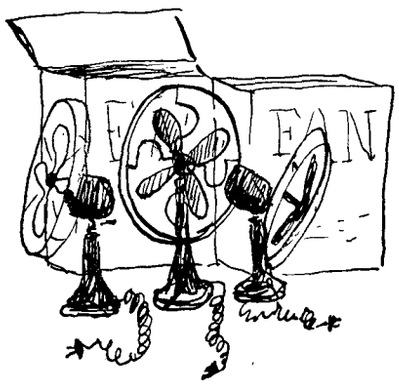
The demands of rhyme have added many a sport form to the gaiety of folk speech. In the following quatrain from an old play-party song imperious rhyme dictates a new emphatic form of *you,* a variant of *you-all:*

Needle's eye, thou dost supply
The thread that runs so truly.
Many a beau have I left go
Because I wanted youly.

And in a blue-low stanza from "Bowling Green Jail" *daughter* inevitably finds *oughter:*

The jailer had a daughter that
did what she oughter
With every old jailbird that
reached out and caught her,
It's so low, it's so damp, Bowling Green Jail.

Lay the idiom of one language on top of the vocabulary of another, and you are bound to get some interesting new effects. Over the radio Jack Benny says, "I had to tell him yet," and fiction in the American-



Yiddish dialect supplies a rich variety of such expressions coined by people who think in Yiddish and speak American. The influence of the German movable prefix may well be behind the Dutchman who put a simple observation on life into one sentence: "The more a man lives the more he finds by. Jiminy Christmas out!" That's not unlike the intensive infixes which the Irish brought with them to America: inde-goddam-pendent and "I'm from West-by God-Virginia, Sir!"

In those expressions you cut the word open and insert an infix; stuff the word with force. Pure sportiveness also makes changes. We all like to say *Philamadelphia* because the intrusive *ma* makes the word come more trippingly offen the tongue. Satire smiles in other coinages. The man who said of a friend who had married for dough, "He's on his moneyhoon," was speaking the kind of metathesis that turned *bit of difference* into the *niff-a*-stifference Johnny Reb sang in another one of his Civil War songs.

The Law of Compensation is another creative force for change in the common speech. *Arter, orful, winder, holler,* put an *r* where no *r* was before. To compensate for such pronunciations as the rhyme words in

I got a gal at the head o' the holler;
She won't come and I won't foller,

the Clam Diggers take the *r* out of words in which another consonant follows *r.* The result is a broad juicy diphthong over which the New Jerseyite may well smack his lips, a tumbling cascade of *hoit, loin, goil,* and *noive.* I well remember one phrase of Joisey speech, the remark of a Newark taxicab driver who thought he knew me: "You'se used to woik here, usen't youse?"

The folk in their dialect have the courage and audacity which makes for style. General Forest's "Git thar fustest with the mostest," certainly has thrift, and the click of train wheels over rail-joints beats out merrily in

Some folks say that de Dummy don't run,
But jes come and lemme tell you
what the Dummy done done.

The dialect can yank out beauty too. All the sad-happy loveliness of the New England fall speaks in Thoreau's dialectical "In autumn I went a-graping to the river meadows." If our American dialects have to go, they will leave many a richly native expression behind them.

HORACE REYNOLDS.

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THE FINE ARTS

WASHINGTON ALLSTON, ECLECTIC

FOR ME Washington Allston (1779-1843) has long had a great fascination—as artist, as personality, as a vital link between our eighteenth- and nineteenth-century pictorial traditions. I remember my chagrin on hearing him dismissed as an artist *manqué;* I remember insisting that a fellow critic's tepid opinion of the painter sprang from a too casual knowledge of his works. Now I have seen the Allston exhibition organized by the Detroit Institute of Arts and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the first show on this large scale since 1881, and some of my more enthusiastic words are back with me as renegades. The Detroit-Boston exhibition suggests Allston's immense charm, and reaffirms his role in extending American art beyond the limits of Colonial portraiture and expatriate history-painting. But viewed purely as an artist, Allston falls below expectation. There is no other way to say it: a master is a master, and Allston was not. One need only look at the Copley in an adjoining gallery at Boston to understand how inexorable is the authority of major creative talent.

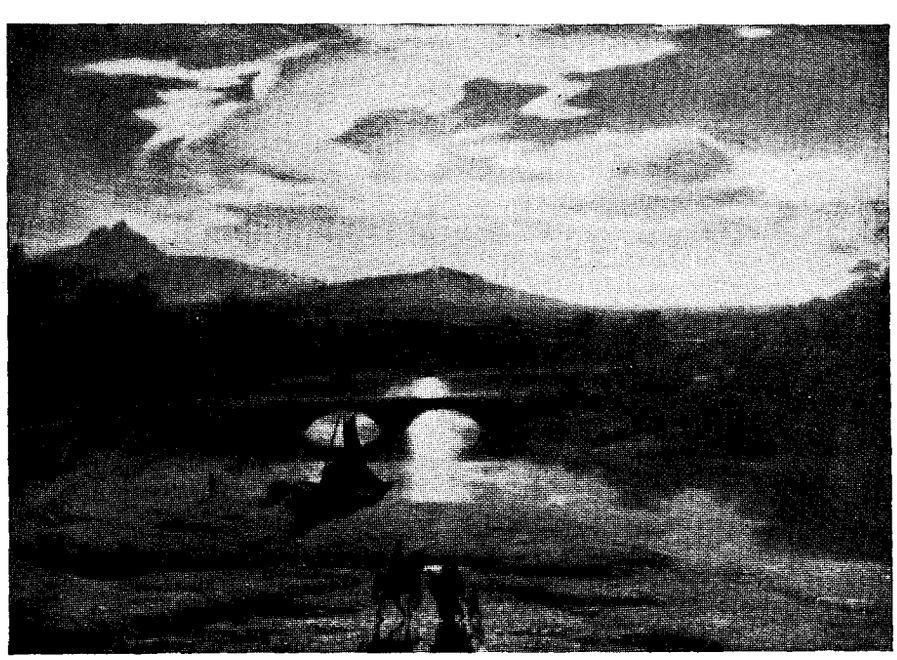
Nevertheless, Allston painted some fine pictures. Born on a plantation in South Carolina, he was educated at Harvard. There the "Gothick" tales of Mrs. Radcliffe fed a romantic imagination already aroused by Southern folklore, told him by the Negroes. He intended to paint wild landscapes, like those of Salvatore Rosa which had nourished the eighteenth-century *romans noirs* he so admired. Needing professional training, he sold his plantation and went to London to study under Benjamin West at the Royal Academy, from 1801 to 1803, and later declared that after a year in that city he was "rid of this banditti mania." The truth is, however, that a love of "Gothick" horrors remained with him forever, and was perhaps one of the spears on which his fertile imagination eventually broke to pieces.

In 1804 he went to Paris and saw the superb loot that Napoleon had assembled in the Louvre. In that city and year, he painted two of his outstanding pictures in the vein of horror-romanticism—"The Deluge" and "The Rising of a Thunderstorm at Sea." I once heard these pictures described as prophetic of later trends in European as well as American art, but such a claim ignores ample eighteenth-century precedent, both English and French. It would be interesting to know, for example, whether Allston saw in Paris Joseph Vernet's mid-eighteenth-century paintings of shipwrecks and raging storms. In any case, Allston's two pictures were painted twenty years before our own Hudson River School began occasionally to celebrate the menacing aspects of nature, and they differ from most of their European prototypes in their primeval quality. Whereas Vernet's shipwrecks are staged near shore, Allston's images offer no possible refuge in nearby civilization: his deluge overpowers man in prehistoric isolation; his thunderstorm lashes two boats in the middle of a vast ocean. Allston was an American, and he remembered a continent in most of which nature had not been even unreliably tamed.

Between 1804 and 1808 Allston lived and worked in Rome, and was liked and admired by Coleridge and other luminaries of the period. Going through the exhibition at Boston, I had the impression that this was one of two points at which he most nearly became a great artist. His "Landscape with a Lake" (1804) and "Diana in the Chase" (1805) are beautiful pictures; the former was not to be rivaled for richness of color in American landscape until George Inness appeared two generations later. Moreover, these paintings introduced to American art what Mr. E. P. Richardson, director of the Detroit Institute, aptly describes as a "romantic idealism"—an idyllic vision of landscape as Arcadia, later quite common in native painting.

A second high point in the exhibition, for me at least, is provided by the portraits which Allston executed in Boston and London between 1809 and 1815. One of these is a portrait of the artist's brother-in-law, William Ellery Channing. The moody, tender face of the great Unitarian emerges with curious insistence from an atmospheric haze, tentative, yet strong and compelling. Later, in London, Allston painted his master, Benjamin West, and the toothless old painter is tremendously real and haunting. If only Allston had gone on with his Arcadian landscapes and romantic portraits.

He did not go on steadily. Instead, he tried his hand at various subjects and styles, influenced most consistently by the tonal discoveries of the sixteenth-century Venetians. He seemed to dissolve in his own intelligence at times, painting grandiose, lifeless figures like "Uriel in the Sun," trying his hand at Biblical and literary themes with spare success, and reaching his peak, it seems to me, only in the pastorals such as "Moonlit Landscape" (1819), "Landscape, Evening" (1821) and "Italian Landscape" (c. 1830). We cannot fairly say that he declined with age, for he sometimes painted as well in middle and late life as in youth. His difficulty



"Moonlit Landscape," by Washington Allston.

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was his eclecticism, his lack of cohesive identity as an artist. He wobbled; he too rarely stood up straight and walked his own path; I suppose primarily he was over-educated.

The malady of dispersion from which Allston suffered may be recognized most clearly in the section of drawings included in the show. Here there are several firm early drawings, notably a "Nude Girl Standing," reproduced in the catalogue of the exhibition (The Detroit Institute of Arts, 50¢). Later we find Allston alternating between the coloristic drawing of the Venetians and a harder, academic style. In the "Study for Jacob's Dream" of 1818 he pays tribute to Flaxman's outline rendition of neo-classicism; in another drawing one senses the influence of Fuseli's distraught Mannerism. His drawing seems to have no true signature. What is perhaps more serious, it did not always serve his painting well, and an otherwise commendable picture such as "The Sisters" is marred by the definition of the neck of one figure, while the head of the angel in "The Angel Releasing St. Peter from Prison" is eccentric and weak in contour. He drew more confidently in profile than in depth, and if the dean of the Hudson River School, Thomas Cole, was justified in saying that Allston was the only American who knew how to draw a hand, the same could not always be claimed for his drawing of shoulders and arms in motion. He must have strained very often to be better than he was.

Allston returned to America permanently in 1818, and settled down in Boston and finally in Cambridgeport. One of many services that Mr. Richard's foreword to the catalogue performs is to point out that Allston painted a good number of pictures in his declining years. This refutes the legend that the artist spent all his time painting and repainting "Belshazzar's Feast," a huge canvas which he envisioned in 1817 and left unfinished and nearly ruined at his death. Yet it is known that he spent endless hours on this picture, once on the way to completion and then begun anew when Allston listened to Gilbert Stuart's criticism of its perspective. Indeed, Allston slaved at the work, like the hero of Balzac's "Chef d'Oeuvre Inconnu," and with the same tragic results. He referred to the picture constantly, and his attitude toward it became paranoiac. He guarded the canvas so zealously that on one occasion he is said to have demanded that workmen entering his studio walk with their backs to it; he was continually on guard against attacks on its merits, real or imagined. It is no wonder that when he died, leaving the half-wrecked painting, his close friend, R. H. Dana, Jr., should have written thankfully in his diary: "He has escaped that terrible vision—the nightmare, the incubus, the tormentor of his life—his unfinished picture."

Nothing is so tiresome as the gestures of small martyrdom. But Allston's ordeal was neither little nor brief. For twenty-five years "Belshazzar's Feast" tormented him as an obsession of which he was never entirely free, and which the adulation of many of his great countrymen did little to alleviate. It seems to me, however, that the big canvas was merely a tangible point of focus for his basic indecisiveness as an artist, that it came to represent in his mind conflicts of character beyond his power to resolve. We shall know more details of his story soon. Both Mr. Richardson and Mr. H. W. L. Dana are preparing books on the artist; both are eminently qualified for this important work. I say "important," for whatever Allston's deficiencies as a painter, he remains a crucial figure in the evolution of American art. Speaking quite personally, there are no art books I look forward to reading with greater interest than the two Allston monographs which we may expect in the near future.

JAMES THRALL SOBY.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 218

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 218 will be found in the next issue.

OPAGA BY CQ STAKFSOA

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THE STATE OF TOMORROW

(*Continued from page 8*)

it will be supported socially. What is likely to be, or should be the attitude of the state to the writers whom it supports, and of the writers to the state by whom they are supported?

Admittedly, we can have no perfectly clear idea of what the state of the future will be, but for the purpose of this inquiry, which is in general terms, the gift of precise prophecy is not required. Here I assume only this: that the new state can meet the pressing and crying needs of humanity—food, work, peace, security; it will consequently be popular in the sense that it will have the support of the majority of its citizens, and it will be, by the very nature of the tasks which it will have to perform, more integrated, more powerful, and more emphatic than were most of the pre-war democracies. Above all, it will be efficient or will aim at being so.

MAYBE the assumptions are unwarranted. Maybe now that we have relapsed into the old inefficiency of unregulated production and consumption, the clash of private interests, the avoidance of responsibility, the much-trodden road to war, there is little raw material out of which to build a future. But one may still hope for the best, and the best that seems available now is an efficient organization to meet the most obvious needs of men and women. And for the purpose of this present inquiry it matters little whether the efficient state is republican, democrat, communist, or imperial. Under dictatorships literature has flourished, at least for a short time; and Socrates was put to death by a restored democracy. Literature may well gain force and direction and power from the new regime which we imagine. Can it also keep its integrity?

The question of Socrates has indeed an important bearing on our main argument. From the point of view of the restored democrats there is no doubt that Socrates was a menace. His political and moral criticism was too far-reaching, indeed too true, for the general security. Athens had passed through the grimmest years of her history in foreign and civil wars. Now, if ever, was the time for strong government and unquestioning loyalty to "the gods in whom the city believes," those ideals of the past which had made Athens great. Continual and icily exact criticism of these ideals must have seemed, certainly for the time being, worse than in the worst of bad taste, indeed positively dangerous. Yet Socrates at his trial had the face to suggest that, so far from being condemned to death, he should in the best interests of the city be kept for the rest of his life at the public expense and be given free license to disseminate his overwhelming criticisms, since these, he said, were directed to one end alone, "to make men better." What would seem most strange to some of the honest accusers of Socrates is that posterity has agreed with him. Yet how many today would or will agree with a Socrates placed in a similar position in a modern state?

For today and always, it seems to me, literature must make the same claim as Socrates made for himself. It should be treated with honor by the state, even subsidized, and should be not only allowed but expected to criticize the state in every way. For this is its public service and it is a service which, in these times, seems almost more than ordinarily necessary, since today there exists together with a general desire for the elements of a good life—food, work, and peace (and also a general belief that these elements are attainable)—an extreme vagueness as to how these good things are to be secured and what, in the end, is to be done with them.

This is what may be called the political task of literature—to hold the mirror up to nature, to show men how they live and what is meant by their own words and manners, to investigate everything under the sun, to retain the tradition of the past and to explore the future, to instruct, to criticize, to delight, to create and reveal. In these activities, as in all others, the writer may be greatly helped or greatly hindered by the society in which he lives. The more he can cooperate with this society, the happier, as a rule, he will be.

Yet, though his work is conditioned by his social group, it is not determined by it. And there is a sense in which it is true to say that his work must be, whether he is conscious of it or not, always disruptive of any state organization. For his loyalties as a writer are to something wider and deeper than any state can be. His view of individuals must be closer and more intimate than the view taken by statesmen; his estimate of general principles must be wider and more far-reaching than is possible for a particular legislator. In the ordinary affairs of life he will, like everyone else, look for and admire efficiency. But efficiency can never be to him a reason for existence. And this view of his must penetrate the state itself if the state is not to be a mere machine or an ossification.

"GIVE me," says Milton, "the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties," and in spite of materialists it may indeed be maintained that this is the foundation of the rest, for without this liberty change will never be for the best, but will be either automatic or arbitrary, and certainly inhuman. Literature is always, in one way or other, an affirmation of the future or the past against the present; it dies stone-dead if, from servility or stupidity, it begins to glorify the existing state of affairs as though this were changeless and immortal.

Yet in practice it cannot be easy to convince the politicians of a modern state that one of their chief services to the community is to maintain and encourage what will often appear as a revolutionary movement against themselves. In all times of stress and

Vermonters

By Sjanna Solum

VERMONTERS have bold winters and shy springs
And summers hot as any tropic zone—
Yet brief. Their countryside is set in rings
Of low stone walls. Their mountains are their own
Defense against the world. They stand apart,
As, with a humor both restrained and dry,
They look on life with mild, sardonic eye,
And hide a warm and sympathetic heart.

Vermonters are hard-bitten, stern but just,
And keep within themselves, and spare the tongue;
Yet in the kindliness beneath the crust
Of their reserve, their goodness, though unsung,
Is echoed in the atmosphere that crowns
Their neat, compact, and small white-steepled towns.

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danger censorships have been imposed, and it may well seem after the war, when so many and such urgent practical tasks are to be done, that an efficient government should not tolerate argument at cross-purposes with its open aims. These aims will be reached more quickly if public opinion can, under a central direction, be organized and controlled; whereas a spate of argument and a conflict of opinion will exacerbate existing differences, delay the passage of necessary measures, and so put off the day of general security which is so ardently desired by the masses of "ordinary" men and women. So it may be argued and so it has been argued in the fascist states with which we are at war. Nor, for this reason, is the argument less dangerous to us, for there is clearly something in the argument.

IT CAN only be met from the standpoint of a complete democratic faith, from the belief that, in the last resort, it is the individual and not the state that counts; that the state exists not only to promote the happiness but also the responsibility and goodness of its citizens. It is the belief in man's nature which shines out so proudly from Milton's words: "I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race, where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat."

This is, indeed, the only and the overwhelming argument against the attractions of censorship and control —the claim of each man to be, as much as he can be, the master of his own soul and the seeker after his own happiness. He has duties and obligations to others, certainly, but no obligation can override his duty and right to a private sincerity, and in so far as he abrogates this right he ceases to be human. But unfortunately the argument does not end here. Private sincerity is often impossible and almost valueless without some system of social security, some organization in which there exists a generally recognized way of life. Life would be impossible in a state where the forces of liberalism and fascism were equally divided. Indeed, the success of fascism has been mainly due just to this fact, that it has attempted at a low level to reconstruct a general system of belief to replace the vagueness and uncertainties of unregulated liberalism. Whatever claims one may make for the nature and destiny of man, one cannot claim this—that he is able to exist and develop in a spiritual vacuum or in a mere riot of conjecture. His life, both physical and intellectual, demands a certain stability, and the efficient state which we have imagined will be valued not only for its promise of economic security but also for its ability to coordinate national aims. And the more successful it is —in both of these respects—the more dangerous will be the position for literature. Yet also more full of promise: since if the state can be not only efficient but self-critical, not only stable but developing, the future both of the state and of literature may justify the brightest hopes. Writers, like everyone else, will welcome an ordered society of peace and plenty; and literature can collaborate with the state that achieves these ends. The state, in its turn, must admit the paradoxical nature of this collaboration—that the writer, however he may serve the state, is still the tribune of the person, the critic of institutions, the agent of change. This must always be his work, and today he has a part to play which is even more important and more difficult. His value will be in attempting to redefine the ends for which men desire to live, to salvage from the past what is permanent and set it in its place of honor, to set what is critical, strange, reflective, and apparently useless in opposition to what is stereotyped, practical, obvious, and efficient.

To fulfil such a task the greatest freedom of expression is necessary and the greatest risks may have to be run. It may seem easy and attractive to attempt to transform man into a dutiful and "pious" political animal, and so to emphasize the securities and real delights of community feeling that individual consciousness and responsibility will seem outmoded luxuries or weaknesses. Yet, with the best of intentions, this is the road to fascism, tyranny, and despair. Aeneas was wrong in believing that simple dutifulness is the greatest of the virtues, nor is it the greatest of destinies to be able to crush the rebellious and handle carefully those who are submissive. The "fates of the gods" are much more complicated and demand a perpetual tension between old and new, between the rebel and the official. Each is contained in the same person; each has much to give. Yet in a way the rebel has the last word, for there is no divinely appointed state of equilibrium, and for the state itself, of which so much is hoped and promised, the final end to be accomplished is a "withering away."

EDITOR'S NOTE: *This article is a preview chapter from Rex Warner's forthcoming "The Cult of Power." A previous chapter appeared in* SRL, *April 5, 1947.*

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Escape from Tradition

THE GARRETSON CHRONICLE. By Gerald Warner Brace. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1947. 383 pp. $3.

Reviewed by PAMELA TAYLOR

SUMMER visitors in New England have long been fascinated by a frequent phenomenon, the local handy-man who lives in the handsomest, though often the most dilapidated, house in the village (or has just sold it to city folks), who bears the proud name of those who once built the town, whose ancestors bought and used the fine furniture which now forms the stock in trade of the local antique store.

Are they happier than their grandfathers and great-grandfathers, these men in whom the fire of ambition has burned out, but the rugged individualism of the Yankee tradition remains stubbornly alive? Have they come to terms with a modern world? Is their own solution a defeat or a victory? This is the question which Gerald Warner Brace poses in his novel of New England, "The Garretson Chronicle."

Actually it is the story of three successive generations of the men in this family, told, in the first person, by Ralph Garretson. "I was brought up," he says, "ostensibly in a tradition of liberality and democracy, and actually in an atmosphere of class distinction. My people had been a ruling caste for a long time, which in Massachusetts meant that they had been scholars, ministers of the church, and property holders." Ralph Garretson, from the vantage point of a generation which has sought to cut itself loose entirely from the past, finds himself bound to it more and more. As he looks back to assess old Theodore Garretson, his autocratic, minister-turned-novelist grandfather, his ineffectual father Randall, whose retreat from life and from his chosen profession of architecture once seemed failure to his son (now he is not so sure), Ralph Garretson also takes stock of his own escape from tradition. For Ralph has become a carpenter, and has married the local druggist's daughter.

As he has grown older the blame for his own "ills and ineptitudes" has shifted in Ralph Garretson's mind; once it seemed a simple matter in black and white, his father's failure had created his own. Now a longer perspective stretches out, into the long past.

Mr. Brace has selected a scene, a tradition, which has long intrigued the American imagination. He has drawn men who are believable—recognizable variations on the great New England theme. Whether a certain bloodlessness, a lack of vitality is inadvertent, or whether it is a deliberate comment on the men whose portraits he has sought to draw, is not quite clear.

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Spotlight on Moses

THE EXODUS. By Konrad Bercovici. New York: The Beechhurst Press. 1947. 319 pp. $3.

Reviewed by BRIG. GEN. DONALD ARMSTRONG

OF THE making of fictional biographies of Biblical characters there is no end. Since the source is generally literature at its best, the modern author must justify his reconstruction, and this is no easy task. If he uses the results of recent historical and archaeological research, something worth while may be added. If he interprets character in the light of present psychological knowledge, he might conceivably offer a more convincing and acceptable portrait of these leaders and prophets. Without benefit of Freud, however, the anonymous authors of antiquity were surely perceptive psychologists. Furthermore, the modern writer may give a more nearly universal appeal to these characters by removing from the ancient biographies the priestly propaganda of the original. Finally, he may invent plausible details to fill the yawning gaps in the traditional sources.

Doubtless there is greater justification for reconstructing the story of Moses and the escape of the Israelites from Egypt than for most attempts of this sort. Moses wanders through three books of the Pentateuch. The biography is buried in a mass of extraneous material that makes reading difficult. Therefore, Mr. Bercovici had an excellent opportunity to retell the story of Moses and his people, more artistically than in the mingled biography, history, and priestly ritual of the Old Testament. There is inevitably a gain in unity and in the uninterrupted sweep of events. Mr. Bercovici is not loath to add for the modern reader the details of the vice and moral degradation of Pharaoh's court and of the Hebrews themselves when, during Moses's absence, they worshipped the golden calf instead of Yahveh. The contrast with the inspired ethics taught by Moses is thereby made the clearer.

The Moses of this book is hardly the mystic of the Old Testament. He is rather a masterfully dynamic leader, frequently a leader in spite of himself, who creates ineluctably the circumstances that enable the Children of Israel to escape from slavery and ultimately into the Promised Land. He lacks much of the characteristic noted specifically in the Old Testament: "Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth." He is the vicar on earth of the Lord God of Hosts. He has to overcome Pharaoh's reluctance to let his people go. He needs all the force and energy he can muster to combat the inertia and even the recurring hostility of the Israelites themselves. Mr. Bercovici's portrait of Moses is eminently human and understandable, although we are constantly aware that we are in the presence of a rare personality that transcends humanity in compassion for his fellows, and in spiritual purpose.

The private life of Moses is necessarily entirely Mr. Bercovici's invention. It emphasizes the constant struggle in the complex character of the protagonist who altered the course of history. The social life of the Egyptians and Hebrews is amply illuminated although the spotlight is on Moses. It is he and he alone who shakes the primitive Israelites out of their moral and social lethargy. Mr. Bercovici's retelling of one of the world's great stories is appealing and generally entertaining.

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NEW EDITIONS

THE Cambridge University Press "Shakespeare," edited by John Dover Wilson and the late Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, grows play by play, slowly and satisfactorily, towards completion. The volumes are light in the hand, their typography and binding are a joy to lovers of simplicity, and their surviving editor is one of the best men in his field. Fortified by knowledge, he is also strong in opinion, and an eloquent advocate of his own convictions. Other scholars may and do disagree with some of these, but they disagree unwarily if they are not as well-weaponed as their opponent. It is hard today to look straight at Shakespeare's text. Mists raised by editors, critics, and scholiasts obscure the view. But John Dover Wilson does look straight; and he trusts his own eyes.

"Henry V," recently and brilliantly translated into technicolor, has now been added to this Cambridge edition, distributed in the United States by Macmillan ($2.50). The play is largely free from textual problems, for the First Folio is authoritative, and the editor has given us what is "virtually a reprint in modern spelling of the folio text, punctuation and all, though with the addition of editorial stage-directions." He has also given us a sound and lively introduction, in which he goes to bat for a drama that has never been much admired by critics; while in the most interesting of his notes he argues, as he has before in "The Fortunes of Falstaff," that the fat knight "once larded the sodden field of Agincourt," but that he was cut out of the play, possibly owing to Will Kempe's leaving the company, and that what could be salvaged of his "dramatic effects" were transferred to Pistol. A single oversight betrays the transfer, although earlier editors have been blind to it.

Mr. Wilson also believes that the Chorus may well have been spoken in the original production of 1599 by Shakespeare himself, and he makes out a good case for this belief. Writing on such themes as Henry's character, the killing of the prisoners, the wooing of Kate, and the relation of the whole play to its original audience, Mr. Wilson takes issue with other critics, from Dr. Johnson down to Mark Van Doren. Whether or not he manages to carry every point, what he has to say always deserves the reader's close and respectful attention.

Speaking generally of the Cambridge "Shakespeare," I can only agree with Robert Lynd, who has declared: "No more attractive edition of Shakespeare's plays has ever been issued for the general reader."

"The Paradine Case," by Robert Hichens, which will soon be brought to the screen as a result of one of David Selznick's most ambitious and most expensive efforts, has just been issued in new edition by the World Publishing Company ($1.49), while the same author's "Young Mrs. Brand" has been reprinted by Grosset & Dunlap ($1.49). In both books Hichens displays the talent which once made him a best seller, and in both he exhibits deficiencies which make him fall short of the level on which "serious" novelists breathe and write. He knows how to tell a story which will hold even a thoughtful reader's interest, but he does not know how to tell it in a way that will command the same reader's continued interest and respect once the tale is done. Skilfully able to pose and manipulate his characters, he does not bring them to full, independent life.

Robert Nathan's "Portrait of Jennie" (Penguin, 25¢) contains some of its author's most charming writing, and Jennie is one of his most appealing heroines. The tale also plays tricks with time that are calculated to baffle any matter-of-fact reader. . . . The style of John Lindsey's "Robert Burns," now in the Black and Gold Library (Liveright, $2.49), is often lush and sometimes fancy, but the tremendous vitality of Burns himself animates its pages. . . . Fred C. Kelly has collected what he calls "The Living Writings of George Ade" under the title "The Permanent Ade" (Bobbs-Merrill, $3), but this title expresses a friendly hope rather than a truth. The fact is that Ade wrote glibly for a passing day, now past. . . . Chaucer's "The Canterbury Tales" (Prentice-Hall, $4), selected and edited by Edwin Johnston Howard and Gordon Donley Wilson, with introduction, notes, and glossary, is a useful textbook edition, but I can see no excuse, even in these days, for printing it on such inferior paper, at such a price.

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Penthouse Lament

SPRING ON 52ND ST. By Dorothy Speare. New York: Rinehart & Co., Inc. 1947. 249 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by MERLE MILLER

WHEN two such eminent men of letters as Basil Davenport and Carl Van Doren are quoted on the jacket of a new novel as finding it filled with "insight," "distinction," and "understanding," the rest of us are likely to read it hopefully; there are so few books being published these days about which even one of those words can be used.

This, then, may be a minority report on Dorothy Speare's "Spring on 52nd Street." I found it extremely readable, occasionally warm, frequently well written; but none of Mr. Davenport's or Mr. Van Doren's adjectives seem to me accurately used. The characterizations I found superficial, often more caricature than portraiture, and the alleged mystery of Ann Barclay's suicide, the weakness in her make-up that caused her to find her life quite suddenly sordid and unendurable would not, I felt, have puzzled any reasonably observant adolescent for long.

After a rather studied third-person prologue in a veterans' hospital, the story—excepting a brief epilogue—becomes the first-person, colloquial narrative of Jerry Edwards, a handsome, somewhat vacuous soda jerker whom Ann Barclay, a beautiful, nearly wealthy young widow, met one evening when she was having trouble with her escort, James Roy O'Hanlon, the brilliant, sometimes drunken prosecutor. The action, which takes place eight years before the post-war prologue, then centers around that small, narrow few blocks of restaurants, penthouses, and apartment houses with uniformed doormen beginning at 52nd Street, east, and stretching uptown.

Ann's husband, Tim, had been lost at sea off Labrador where he was filming the sealing industry; he had been a handsome, talkative, unsatisfactory husband, and, after his death, Ann had come to the city; had once appeared in a play which had reasonably good notices; but, except for that one brief moment, spent her life with the people who clutter the better, at least more expensive, restaurants of Manhattan: an effeminate

composer-pianist, an aging but successful woman playwright, a playboy-producer, a Social Register explorer, a sharp-tongued young lady described only as a "poor little rich girl," and the others who then and now comfortably and contentedly fit into such an atmosphere. The exceptions, of course, are Ann's lover, Jerry, who is dumb as well as beautiful, and O'Hanlon, who, despite the fact that his legal exploits appear on the front pages, is still not quite at home in a black tie.

The events leading up to Ann's suicide and to Jerry's becoming involved in a racket are tersely told in a kind of not-quite successful James M. Cain manner. Somehow, it doesn't quite come off; everything seems rather one-dimensional and unimportant, and Ann herself is more foolish than tragic.

However, Miss Speare does know how to keep a reader interested; I don't think anyone will want to put down her book without finishing it.

You'll gravitate to Gus the Great

Britons at Play

THE SIXTH HEAVEN. By L. P. Hartley. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1947. 438 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by RICHARD A. CORDELL

THAT any one should be moved to write such a novel as this is astonishing to the reader of the early chapters, but not so astonishing as the fact that a publishing firm should risk money on the expectation that any great numbers of customers would enjoy it. Nevertheless the book has appeared, and it is quite probable that many people may find it amusing.

The time is 1919, and the England of that year seems as remote as Trollope's England. The story begins at Oxford, where the post-war year finds no GI's, caravans, and perambulators, but languorous, almost namby-pamby youths in chambers—esthetes *manqués* who loathe efficiency, exercise, and other such vulgarities. Among these willowy but strangely unefeminate young men is Eustace, fantastically conventional, passive, proper, enjoying a sluggish contentment in his sixth heaven, for he cautiously keeps one in reserve. He is painfully devoted to his aggressive, tweedy sister, a practical, unsentimental girl who cuts her losses and who sprints after her bus when necessary. The story moves on to Anchorstone Hall, which has served as setting for a thousand English novels; and its master, bumbling Sir John, is absent from few of them. Here is the grand pattern of English country life before socialist taxation began nibbling at its elegancies and expensive simplicities. Then from Anchorstone Hall to Venice, that drawing room of Europe created especially for well-to-do Britons at sedate play.

"The Sixth Heaven" is a series of causeries, polished, witty, contrapuntal; whatever significance lurks in the string of incidents escapes this reviewer. But the events are of little importance: what matters is the author's fine sense of the ludicrous which permeates the story and makes it frequently delightful. Life at Oxford, in middle-class Willesden, and at Anchorstone Hall is always faintly absurd, and the description of Venice is wittily patronizing. Faintly absurd, too, are all the characters, who are decorously brushed with satire. Amid all this there is some stirring of plot elements, but nothing settles. The fun of the book is in its distinguished wit and the detached and dry amusement with which the novelist views his characters and their tranquil adventures.

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The New Recordings

COMPOSITION, PERFORMER, ALBUM NUMBER, NUMBER OF RECORDS	ENGINEERING		PERFORMANCE AND CONTENT
	Recording Technique	*Surface*	
SCHUMANN, HUMORESKE. Paul Loyonnet, piano. Concert Hall Society AI (3 *plastic*) $7.50	Rather percussive and seems lacking in bass. This "hard," brilliant type piano recording not too good for Schumann.	AA to A—	A most desirable new item on records; seldom heard, but fine Schumann. Brilliant performance, yet lacks expansiveness, intimacy.
TCHAIKOWSKY, PIANO CONCERTO #2. Cherkassky, Santa Monica Symph. Rachmilovitch. Conc. Hall AM (4 *pl.*) $9.45 *Comparison*: Moiseivitch, Liverpool Philharmonic, Weldon. HMV C. 7607-10 (4)	Conc. Hall is hi-fi, but with unfortunate metallic sound-studio style recording; very percussive piano. HMV set lacks highs; yet fine resonance, beautiful piano tone. Why can't *we* conquer the piano?	AA to A— A	Two very diff. interps. of a good concerto. M. plays in the grand manner, heavy not too accurate. Ch. is fleet, pointed, staccato, nice singing phrases. Rachmilovitch orch. is more alive, in spite of unsuitable recording.
CONTEMPORARY SONGS (AMER.) (BOWLES, CHANLER, CARTER, HENDL). Wm. Hess, tenor; Robt. Fizdale, pianist. Hargail HN 709 (3 10") $4.50	Wide range. Piano is so-so. Voice often good, but is too close —blas's badly on some peaks.	B	Fifteen short songs, of the naïve school. Most are unpretentious, some really good. Beautifully done by Hess and Fizdale.

THE AMPLIFIER II

(Continued from SRL *July 5)*

THOUGH the function of an amplifier is always the same, to magnify a tiny electrical signal to one hundreds of times larger with as little distortion as possible, in practice amplifiers are bewilderingly diverse from the beginner's viewpoint. As mentioned in the first of this series, there are two possibilities for the home amplifier-seeker. You may buy a ready-made amplifier unit, or you may build one yourself. An intermediate stage is the amplifier kit, ready to assemble.

Ready-made amplifiers fall roughly into three categories. There are, first, numerous ultra-simple and very cheap amplifiers, one or two tubes, that will reproduce records as well as most low-priced portables. But for quality, two other categories, costing a good deal more, are much preferable. The most reasonably priced good quality amplifiers are those sold very widely for public address (P.A.) systems. Many record owners have had excellent service from them. In general they give what constitutes high fidelity performance of a sort, with fairly low distortion. However, they are designed first of all for power output at the expense of other aspects. Common sense will indicate that quietness, accuracy, quality of components are bound to be sacrificed to some extent. In the home, power is relatively unimportant, quality much more so than for the usual public address situation.

At a considerably greater expense still, a third category constitutes the ideal, the amplifier designed specifically for high fidelity performance with records or radio. For the money, its power output is considerably less than the equivalent P.A. amplifier, but, again, what count more are the better response, better quality parts, and notably the more versatile equalizing or tone control facilities. A really useful home amplifier should have continuously variable separate controls for bass and treble; the very best will have both attenuation and accentuation from normal on the same knob, with the normal position in the middle. All amplifiers, incidentally, will have microphone preamplifiers that may be used with the new low-gain pickups.

The finest high fidelity amplifiers of this type now run up into the three hundreds of dollars; the lowest price is around sixty. A P.A. type amplifier can be had for less than twenty-five; more money simply buys more unneeded power. The more expensive amplifiers are remarkably simple in construction and appearance—misleadingly so; for it is the design and quality of material that counts, not the complexity!

(To be further continued.)

EDWARD TATNALL CANBY.

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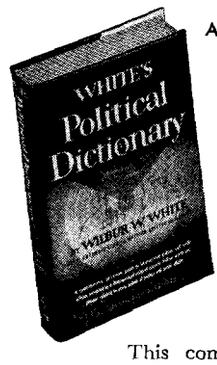

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TWO OLD LADIES IN BLACK

EVERY afternoon at three
We would secretly agree
To wait by the pecan tree,

To see the old ladies in black,
Who drove as far as the track,
And then slowly drove back.

While we gazed down the street
We'd hear the echo of feet
Ring across the worn concrete.

A pair of horses would appear
Jingling their leather gear
As they turned and swiftly drew near.

Our eyes were glued to the mirage
Of the shiny black carriage
With its fancy equipage.

Announced by the slam of a door,
As the clock struck four
The old ladies left their parlor.

They were dressed from head to toes
In coats and furbelows.
They even wore black cameos.

Like a blackbird's shining feather
Their gleaming jet and leather
Sparkled in the sunny weather.

As unconcerned as daws,
Without the slightest pause
They were launched upon a cause

Of imbibing the fresh air
That sweeps away all care
When the day is fair.

We had seen the old ladies in black,
They would soon be coming back
From their drive to the railroad track.

Distantly their veiled white faces,
Their black jewels, and fragile laces
Now recede to picture-book spaces.

JULIA SELDEN GRANDY.

* * *

From Earl Walbridge:

A year or so ago I quoted a bit from one of Miriam Allen de Ford's letters, concerning the recently deceased Ed. Morrell, original of Jack London's "Star Rover." Well, I seem to have started something! Could you help me execute a commission for a lady, especially since that lady is Mrs. Charmian London? Mrs. London is trying to find the name of the writer of a sonnet, the last line of which, "God's own mad lover, dying on a kiss," is repeatedly quoted or referred to in London's autobiographical novel, "Martin Eden." Mrs. London also quotes it in the second volume of her "The Book of Jack London." The poem is "more impassioned than perfect" (as you called some of the verse in "The Poetry of Freedom"), but that last line has stuck in my head ever since I first read "Martin Eden," and reread it in the recent Penguin reprint. Mr. Allen Lane, of Sacramento, Calif., who wrote me for Mrs. London, sends the complete text of the poem, which may have been called "Sonnet of Revolt":

Life—what is life? To do without avail
The decent ordered tasks of every day:
Talk with the sober, join the solemn play:
Tell for the hundredth time the self-same tale
Told by our grandsires in the self-same vale
Where the sun sets with even, level ray,
And nights, eternally the same, make way
For hueless dawns, intolerably pale—
And this is life? Nay, I would rather see
The man who sells his soul in some wild cause:
The fool who spurns, for momentary bliss,
All that he was and all he thought to be:
The rebel stark against his country's laws:
God's own mad lover, dying on a kiss.

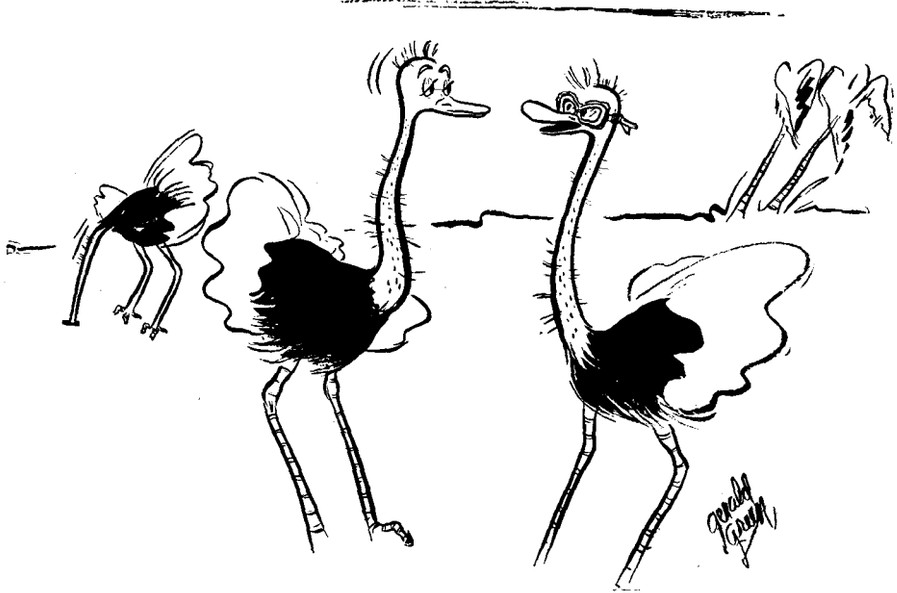
In an interesting passage of "Martin Eden" (pp. 255-256), Eden reads "Ephemera," a long poem by his friend Russ Briessenden. Eden is affected as was London by George Sterling's "Testimony of the Suns" (Brissenden is drawn from Sterling). Mrs. Mary Colum, in "Life and the Dream"—an enthralling book—asks whether anyone still remembers Sterling's poems. Well, there was a time when I could quote you most of Sterling's "A Wine of Wizardry": it came out in *Cosmopolitan* for September 1907, followed by a belligerent essay by Ambrose Bierce, and it knocked me for a loop. I still think Keats would have liked this passage:

As far below the deep-hued ocean molds,
With water's toil and polished pebbles' fret,
The tiny twilight in the jacinth set,
The wintry orb the moonstone-crystal holds,
Snapt coral twigs and winy agates wet,
Translucences of jasper, and the folds
Of banded onyx, and vermilion breast
Of cinnabar. . . .

* * *

The following is a little idle thinking. . . . One wonders sometimes how much difference it would have made if "A Shropshire Lad" had been entitled, instead, "A Salop Lad"? . . . Who wrote the utterly satisfactory editorial in *The New Yorker* on John Chamberlain's prayerful adjuration of Robert Lovett, in the name of Brave Mother Yale, in Harry Luce's *Life*? Andy White? It sounded like his perfect sense of touch. Young Mr. Chamberlain, referring to Mr. Lovett's wife as Adèle Brown of Brown Brothers, missed mentioning that she is one of the most beautiful people I have ever seen, and as good as that, too. . . . Auden introduces us, in "Slick But Not Streamlined," to John Betjeman, his poems and short pieces. And the latest query among the intelligentsia may be, "Are you a topophile?" Mr. Betjeman is most engaging in a very British way, and I haven't had so much quiet amusement, while being genuinely informed, since I don't know when. I can see how Auden, who has written tongue-in-cheek ballads himself of notable merit, must have relished

She died in the upstairs bedroom
By the light of the ev'ning star



"They keep the sand out of my eyes when I hide."

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That shone through the plate glass window
From over Leamington Spa.

In his prose "Apostrophe to One of the Landed Gentry," Betjeman has a line I recommend to his friend as the refrain for a ballad, "Soon the cars and the people will be coming up the drive." Mr. Betjeman knows a lot about English towns and their architecture. He also knows dons, *vide:* p. 137, "A Don Looks at His Fellows," about Professor Harpoon, Emeritus of Medieval Ichthyology. This is as good as Harry Graham on the Blood-Busterfields in "Biffin and His Circle," which, as the shades of September were drawing in, I used to read to my wife in the summer cottage of a Universalist clergyman, to the purring of the sitting-room fire. What a book *that* is, by the way! Either you think it perpetually convulsing, so that you read with tears in your eyes, or you find it infinitely lulling. Sometimes both. To return to Betjeman, in his essay on dons, the horrors of "Buffy Bounce" and "dear old H. J." must be read to be imagined! His essay on "The Morris Works" is good too. As he says, "Between Morris Cowley and the Bodleian there is a great gulf." But the deadliness of industrialism and the deadliness of scholarship are equated in that essay. . . . After reading "The Dark Side of the Moon," (preface by T. S. Eliot) all about the brutality of the Russians to the Poles, and, indeed, to their own people, the sickened mind pondered pessimistically on what we call "progress." Of course, if you consider the French peasantry under Louis XIV (look up La Bruyère's famous passage!) and the reign of all the vices in the Regency, including the rakes and debauchees who became cardinals of the Church you have something as bad, in its way. But it makes today's colors of blood and offal no less nauseating. This is the era of the prison camp, and of human beings driven by stupid overseers into exhausted despair. What it all has to do with social ideals, or an economic advance, is hard to see. I prefer the sins of modern America.

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

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(Continued on page 38)

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(Continued from page 37)

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DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 700

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By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

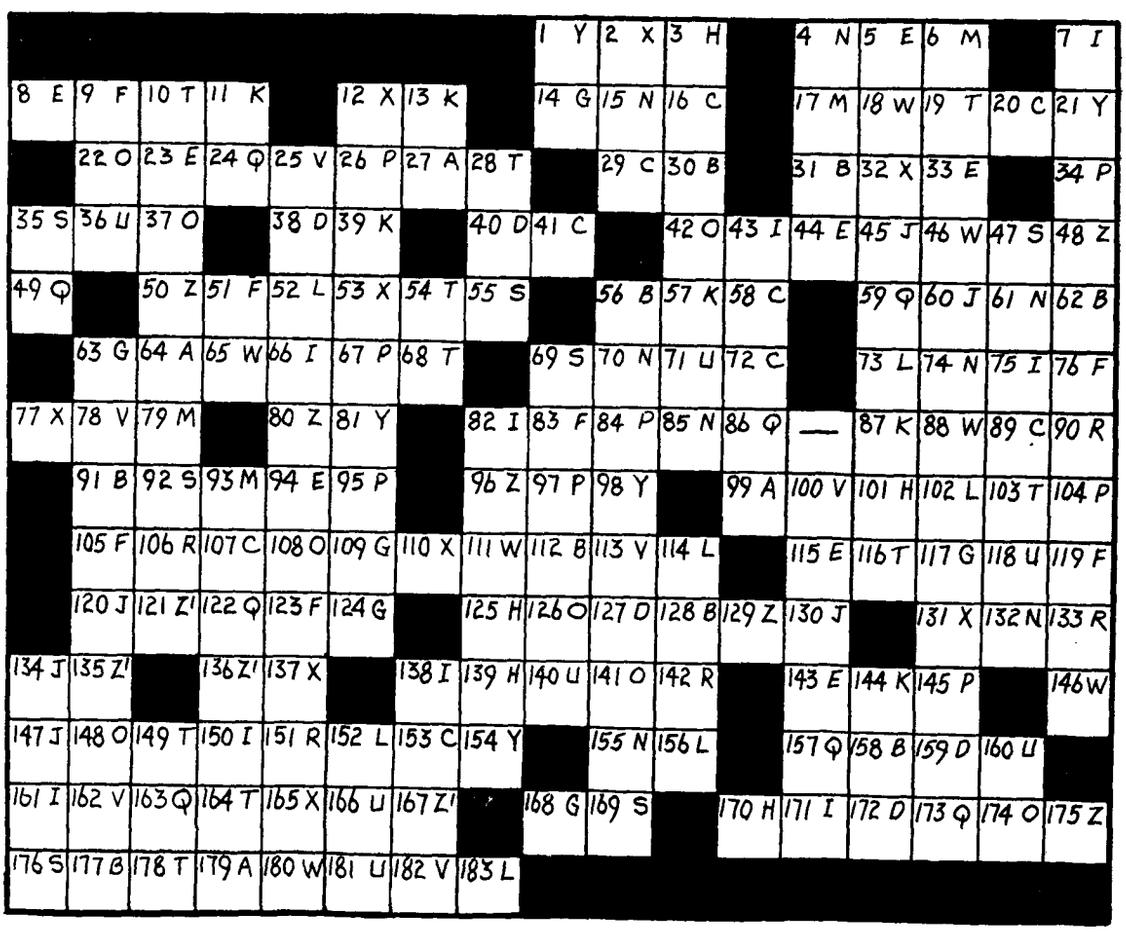
DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. Ancient country north of Persian Gulf (capital, Susa).	27 64 179 99
B. An eolith (Anthrop.; 2 wds.).	128 158 91 177 62 31 56 30 112
C. Grasslike.	89 58 107 72 29 41 16 20 153
D. The elbow (Anat.).	40 127 172 38 159
E. Slender New Zealand tree yielding valuable timber, its habit like a Lombardy poplar (Maori; comp.).	5 44 115 23 94 33 8 143
F. American author and editor (The Atlantic Monthly; 1836-1907).	9 123 76 51 83 105 119
G. A long strap on the saddletree to fasten and tighten the cinch (West. U.S.).	124 109 14 117 63 168
H. Entices; enticements.	125 3 170 139 101
I. Disposition on the side of or against a party or cause.	7 161 150 138 66 43 171 75 82
J. American statesman (1861-1944; Senator from Nebraska, 1913-43).	130 60 147 45 134 120
K. One of numerous fishes capable of inflating the body, like the globefish.	87 57 13 39 11 144
L. A person's contribution, however small, in service or money to a cause (2 wds.).	156 183 152 114 73 52 102

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
M. Norwegian realistic writer of novels, plays, etc. (1869-).	6 17 79 93
N. Any cruel tyrant (origin historical).	61 15 132 85 4 70 74 155
O. Son of Solomon and Naamah, successor to the kingdom (Bib.).	108 148 37 126 22 141 42 174
P. Addicted to suspense of judgment (spec. applied to a school of ancient skeptics).	95 34 97 145 67 84 26 104
Q. One who instigates, arouses, encourages.	59 173 157 122 49 163 86 24
R. Son of Jacob and Zilpah (Bib.).	142 151 106 90 133
S. One who banters good-naturedly.	47 92 35 69 169 176 55
T. Norwegian navigator of tenth century, who explored and named Greenland (3 wds.).	19 10 103 149 164 116 54 28 68 178
U. Amateurish.	36 160 166 71 140 181 118
V. Hard to manage (esp. U.S.).	182 25 78 162 113 100
W. A suite; also, a set of variations (Music).	146 88 18 111 46 180 65
X. Pertaining to correct pronunciation.	12 137 53 32 2 165 131 77 110
Y. Abounding in, or resembling, islets.	98 154 81 21 1
Z. Writer and actress (1819-70; "Fashion, or Life in New York", produced 1845).	175 129 50 48 96 80
Z¹. Steeps or dips in a liquid.	167 136 121 135

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).



Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 37 of this issue.

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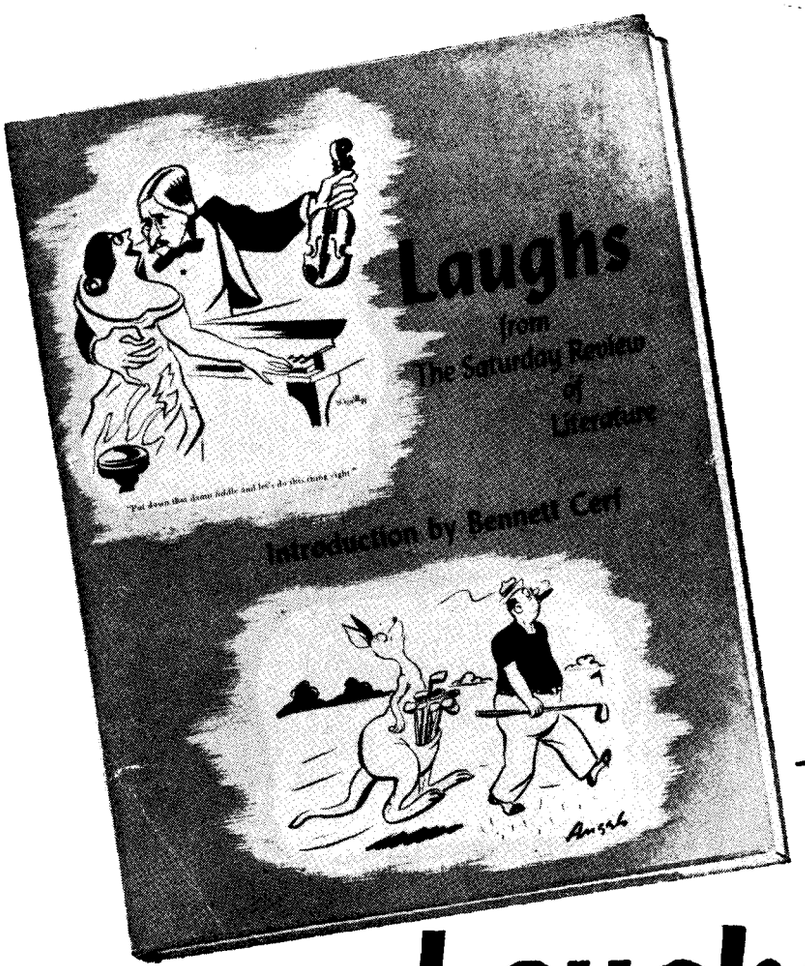

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